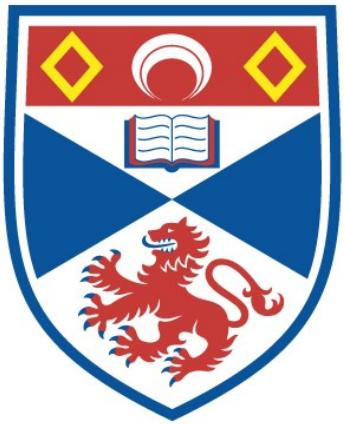
MYTH AND PERSONAL EXPERIENCE IN ROMAN LOVE-ELEGY, WITH CONSIDERATION OF THE HELLENISTIC BACKGROUND

Richard Anthony Whitaker

A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD
at the
University of St Andrews



1979

MYTH AND PERSONAL EXPERIENCE IN ROMAN LOVE-ELEGY, WITH CONSIDERATION OF THE HELLENISTIC BACKGROUND

by

RICHARD ANTHONY WHITAKER

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy Degree in the Faculty of Arts

May 1979

ProQuest LLC.
789 East Eisenhower Parkway
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106 – 1346

MYTH AND PERSONAL EXPERIENCE IN ROMAN LOVE-ELEGY, WITH CONSIDERATION OF THE HELLENISTIC BACKGROUND.

by R.A. Whitaker

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the manner in which the Roman love-elegists used myth to illustrate personal experience. It is shown that the elegists were probably indebted to the poets of the Hellenistic period for the various techniques they used to link myth (usually in the form of *exempla*) to its context.

Chapter 1 looks at some illustrative and paradeigmatic uses of myth by the Hellenistic catalogue-elegists; by Callimachus, Apollonius Rhodius and Theocritus; and by the epigrammatists. It is shown that the major Hellenistic poets developed techniques by means of which the exemplum could be made an integral part even of a short poem or episode. It was Tibullus and Propertius on whom these ways of handling myth had the most effect; Ovid was influenced more by the epigrammatists.

Chapter 2 examines briefly Catullus' handling of myth in his elegy LXVIII and Gallus' possible use of myth.

Chapter 3 deals in some detail with Tibullus' use of myth in I,3 (the Golden Age; Elysium; Tartarus); I,10 (the mythic past; Hades) and II,3 (Apollo and Admetus; the mythic past). The very close connexion between these myths and the poet's personal experience is demonstrated.

Chapter 4 handles Propertius' use of myth to illustrate in various ways his own and his mistress' experience. The material here is treated in three sections: (i) Allusive Exempla - where the poet presupposes knowledge on the reader's part of the mythological events concerned. (ii) Shaped Exempla - i.e. exempla which the poet shapes in different ways for his own purposes, including in them all the details necessary for the reader's understanding. (iii) Mixed Exempla - which combine the characteristics of both the above categories.

Chapter 5 deals with Ovid's use of myth in his *Amores* to illustrate what is presented as personal experience. His mythological illustrations are discussed in four categories: (i) Illustrative Exempla - i.e. exempla used in a rhetorical way simply to prove a given point or statement. (ii) Witty Exempla - used chiefly to create humorous and amusing effects. (iii) Mixed Exempla - combining the functions of both the first two categories. (iv) 'Propertian' Exempla - i.e. exempla handled by Ovid very much in the manner of Propertius.

The Conclusion briefly draws together evidence of the influence of the Hellenistic poets' treatment of myth on the Roman love-elegists. It also outlines what is distinctive and characteristic about each of the elegists' manner of handling myth.

DECLARATION

I was admitted to St. Salvator's College, St. Andrews as a research student and candidate for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty of Arts, in October, 1973.

I hereby declare that the work of which this thesis is a record has been done by myself, that the thesis has been composed by me, and that it has not been accepted in any previous application for a higher degree.

_____

Candidate

I hereby declare that the conditions of the appropriate Resolution and Regulations have been fulfilled.

_____

Supervisor

PREFACE

This thesis was written from 1973 to 1979 in St. Andrews, Munich and Durban. Thanks are due to various people and institutions who assisted me at different times. I should like particularly to thank the Trustees of the Millar-Lyell Scholarship for their award which enabled me to study for three years in St. Andrews; Professor Gordon Williams who supervised the thesis at the beginning, Dr. Adrian Gratwick, and Professor Robert Ogilvie who rendered assistance towards the end; the Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst for a grant enabling me to study for four months in Munich, and Dr. Siegmar Döpp of the Ludwig-Maximilians Universität who helped me greatly while there.

I owe an enormous debt of gratitude to Mrs. Joy McGill of the Classics Department of the University of Natal in Durban for her typing and retyping of my text in draft and in its final form.

Nur wer die Leier schon hob
auch unter Schatten,
darf das unendliche Lob
ahnend erstatten.

Nur wer mit Toten vom Mohn
ass, von dem ihren,
wird nicht den leisesten Ton
wieder verlieren.

Mag auch die Spieglung im Teich
oft uns verschwimmen:
Wisse das Bild.

Erst in dem Doppelbereich
werden die Stimmen
ewig und mild.

- Rainer Maria Rilke,
Die Sonnette an Orpheus, I,9.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The Augustan elegists, as poets of love, stood in the tradition which stemmed from Catullus. They, following him, found in the subject of love proper and adequate material for their poetry. They did not of course write of Love, with a capital L, that is of something general: they wrote rather of something specific and unique, namely their particular love for their particular mistresses. As Catullus had written of his Lesbia, so Tibullus wrote of his Delia and Nemesis, Propertius of his Cynthia, Ovid of his Corinna. Each of them (though more particularly Tibullus and Propertius) strove to convey to his readers something of the essential quality of his passion, something of its uniqueness and individuality.

Yet at the same time the elegists could not be content to remain at the level of the merely particular. They sought to raise their experience in love above the plane of the individual and accidental, and to lend it a universal and timeless significance. Their aim, then, was a somewhat paradoxical one (though no more so, perhaps, than that of any poet). The elegists wanted to display the general somehow embodied in the particular, 'a Heaven in a Grain of Sand'. In their case this meant: to show that their own unique love for a particular mistress was in some sense *not* unique but typical of the experience of all lovers at any time.[1]

This should explain why mythology (most often in the form of παράδειγμα or, to give it its Latin name,

---

1. This is well stated, for Propertius, by B. Kölmel, *Die Funktion des Mythologischen in der Dichtung des Properz*, diss. Heidelberg 1957, p.100: 'Die Dichtung des Properz ist nicht so eng, dass sie unentwegt das eigene Ich anstarrt, den eigenen Schmerz pflegt und nährt, sondern sie versucht immer wieder in der eigenen Situation das Bedeutende, das Allgemeinmenschliche, das ewige Schicksal, das sich im Einzelnen wiederholt, zu sehen.'

exemplum)[2] was so valuable a poetic resource for the Roman love-elegists and why they made such extensive use of it. These poets took advantage of the fact that myth is, by its very nature, poetic, that it contains just that combination, of general significance embodied in the lives and actions of unique particular individuals, which they were seeking to achieve in their own poetry. The tremendous asset of the mythological world so far as the elegists were concerned, was that it embraced a vast range of situations and actions, feelings and emotions, just like their own yet all the more valuable for pertaining to beings greater than themselves - and thus possessing a higher degree of significance - and for being set in the prehistoric past. Because the personages of myth belonged to the remote past, if the elegists could manage by means of exempla to connect those men's lives with their own, this would *guarantee* the timeless significance of their own experience; it would mean that their own love-affairs could not be mere transient accidental phenomena. And similarly, because the characters of myth were larger than life, greater than ordinary mortals, any comparison with them would automatically lend a depth and dignity to the poets' experience which it might not otherwise have appeared to possess.

---

2. On the exemplum as a poetic and rhetorical device, see K. Alewell, *Über das rhetorische* παράδειγμα *in ... der Kaiserzeit*, diss. Kiel 1912, published Leipzig 1913; F. Dornseiff, 'Literarische Verwendungen des Beispiels', *Vorträge d. Bibl. Warburg* IV, 1924-25, 206-28; H. Lausberg, *Handbuch der Literarischen Rhetorik* (2 vols.), Munich 1973 (see vol.II, *Registerband*, *s.v.* 'exemplum'). Alewell notes that ancient theorists of rhetoric dealt almost exclusively with the historical exemplum, which they regarded as superior to the mythological: '... die theorie verwarf das mythologische beispiel; und dem entspricht es, dass die schriftsteller, so häufig sie historische beispiele benutzen, die mythologischen fast ganz verschmähen. wir finden nur die allergewöhnlichsten und bekanntesten ... (as, for example, Hercules, Achilles, Priam, Ulysses)', (Alewell, p.55, n.3; his typography).

We may loosely term the function of myth just described, one of 'idealization'. In this function myth is used to raise the experience of the poet, the appearance of his mistress - or whatever is being compared explicitly or implicitly with some aspect of the mythological world - to an ideal plane well above the level of the ordinary and commonplace. On most occasions when the love-elegists bring myth into contact with personal experience there is, I think, some element of idealization intended, though this is more explicit in some cases than in others. The elegists do, as we shall shortly see, use myth for other purposes as well; but when, for example, Tibullus writes of his Delia -

> talis ad Haemonium Nereis Pelea quondam
> uecta est frenato caerula pisce Thetis (I,5,45 f.)

- he is not trying to achieve anything other by the reference to myth than the enhancement of, the creation of an ideal aura about, his mistress' beauty.[3]

The urgent need the Augustan love-elegists felt to generalize and dignify their experience is, I believe, the fundamental reason for their frequent recourse to myth. A secondary, but also very important, reason is one we may term 'rhetorical'. The elegists naturally enough display in their poetry the effects of the education they received, in which rhetoric played so large a part. This shows in the fact that very often the elegists seem to be striving to *prove* something, or to *convince* someone - their mistress, a friend, the reader - of a particular point. And in order to do

---

3. The use of myth by Roman love-poets to idealize a mistress, is regarded by various modern critics as one of their most distinctive innovations: see in general G. Lieberg, *Puella Divina . Die Gestalt der göttlichen Geliebten bei Catull im Zusammenhang der antiken Dichtung*, Amsterdam 1962. Specifically on Propertius see P. Boyancé, 'Properce' in *Fondation Hardt, Entretiens* vol.II, Geneva 1956; B. Kölmel (*diss.cit.* n.1) Chapter II, particularly pp.91-107; G. Lieberg, 'Die Mythologie des Properz in der Forschung und die Idealisierung Cynthias', *RhM* 112, 1969, 311-47.

so they naturally employed many of the techniques of argument and persuasion. Here again mythology in the form of exempla became peculiarly valuable to the elegists, and for reasons very similar to those outlined above. In the vast records of the mythological tradition they could find an heroic or divine precedent for almost every conceivable human situation; which meant that they could use mythological examples as a rhetorical device to prove or justify virtually anything they wished. (And if no myth could be found exactly to suit the point at issue, one most nearly suitable could always be subtly adapted to order.) Examples of myth used in this way would be Propertius III,2,3-10, where, after citing as exempla the effects wrought by the music of Orpheus, Amphion and Polyphemus, the poet asks:

> miremur, nobis et Baccho et Apolline dextro,
> turba puellarum si mea uerba colit? (III,2,9 f.)

Or again Ovid *Amores* II,6,39-42, where the couplet -

> tristia Phylacidae Thersites funera uidit
> iamque cinis uiuis fratribus Hector erat (*Am*.II,6,41 f.)

- is introduced by the elegist to prove his statement:

> optima prima fere manibus rapiuntur auaris;
> implentur numeris deteriora suis. (*Am*.II,6,39 f.)

It should be plain that the two functions of myth just described, the idealizing and the rhetorical, are not fully separable from each other but may in very many instances overlap. This they do, for example, when Propertius writes (of Cynthia at his death):

> tu tamen amisso non numquam flebis amico:
> fas est praeteritos semper amare uiros.
> testis, cui niueum quondam percussit Adonem
> uenantem Idalio uertice durus aper;
> illis formosus iacuisse paludibus, illuc
> diceris effusa tu, Venus, isse coma. (II,13,51-6)

Part of the purpose of the exemplum here, as *testis* (53) clearly shows, is rhetorical and probative; it is to demonstrate the proposition contained in 51 f. But at the same time it is obvious that the exemplum is meant also to 'idealize' the poet's death, to lend it an

heroic grandeur, through the implied comparison of himself with the godlike Adonis and his mourning mistress with Venus.

In either function myth is regarded by the elegists as establishing a kind of general standard or norm against which may be measured the individual personal experience of themselves or of their mistresses and friends. Most often the elegists allow their references to myth to show that such experience indeed *conforms* to the norm. But this is not always the case. Quite frequently myth is made to prove the opposite, namely that some aspect of modern life falls short of the antique ideal. Thus Tibullus on a number of occasions contrasts his present situation with the carefree conditions of the Golden Age (see below, Chapter 3), while Propertius criticizes Cynthia for failing in her behaviour towards him to match the standard set by the heroines and goddesses of old (see, e.g., Prop.I,2,15 ff.; I,15,9 ff.; II,18,7 ff.). But it is also Propertius who alone among the elegists sometimes asserts that the moderns actually *transcend* the mythological norm.[4] Propertius more than once suggests that Cynthia's beauty exceeds that of any heroine (see, e.g. II,3,27-44 and II,28,29 f.); he says that he saw a friend embrace his girl more passionately than Hercules his Hebe, or Neptune his Pero (I,13,19-24); he exclaims that his own joy in a night of love was greater than that felt (on different occasions) by Agamemnon, Ulysses, Electra and Ariadne (II,14,1-10). In these instances myth still represents a standard. But now the fact that Cynthia's beauty, or the experience of the poet or a friend, do not conform to that standard, far from detracting from them, sheds on them a more brilliant radiance.

The foregoing rather summary discussion should suffice to demonstrate that mythology is by no means

---

4. On this see the excellent discussion of Kölmel (*diss.cit.* n.1) pp.91-107.

something extraneous to Roman love-elegy, but is on the contrary very closely bound up with both its main purposes and essential elements of its style. However, it is not the immediate aim of this thesis to justify the place of myth in Roman elegy[5] - although it should help to do so indirectly. In general I shall simply take for granted that mythological exempla are an integral part of the elegists' poems. The central concern of my thesis will be rather the *manner* in which each of the elegists employs myth.

I shall show that in using myth to illumine personal experience[6] the elegists took full advantage of the former's essentially complex nature. The stories of the mythological tradition represented for the elegists, as has already been said, an independent world peopled by gods and heroes who exemplified an immense range of significant relationships and situations. Almost every character in that world had his or her detailed personal history full of incident, full of connexions with the lives of other characters; with all of which the poet and his readers would have been thoroughly familiar through any number of written

---

5. This should not be necessary after the work of Boyancé, Kőlmel and Lieberg cited above (n.3), to which we may add J.-P. Boucher, *Etudes sur Properce*, Paris 1965, Ch.VIII, 'La Mythologie'. (Although all these studies deal only with Propertius, nevertheless he is the key figure so far as the elegists' use of myth is concerned.) But recently C.W. Macleod has written: 'It is perhaps unnecessary to defend the principle that mythical *exempla* in ancient poetry are not merely decorative, but serve in the expression of "significant emotion"; it would still be welcome to see it more frequently and more coherently applied.' (*CQ* XXIV, 1974, 82-93, p.82). Part of the purpose of this thesis is to show this principle 'coherently applied' to elegy.

6. That I use the phrase 'personal experience' should not be taken to imply any judgment on the literal reality thereof. I mean by 'personal experience' whatever is presented as such by the elegists. It will, of course, in most cases be the poet's own experience, but not infrequently also that of his mistress or a friend.

sources, and through visual representations not only in marble, bronze and paint but also on household objects such as mirrors, tableware, textiles, etc.[7] Hence the value to the elegists of myth as a poetic means to illumine personal experience. Its inherent complexity and its familiarity to their readers meant that the bare mention of a particular mythological character or incident would be sufficient to evoke a wide range of associations which the elegists could exploit as they wished for their various poetic purposes. Sometimes they use myth allusively - they leave it to the reader to supply a relevant detail or make a particular connexion for himself; at other times they so reinterpret an old myth or so word an exemplum, that of itself it suggests to the reader how he should understand it. By these means the elegists bring it about that a mythological exemplum, although assigned a definite *explicit* function to perform, may also perform an *implicit* one - which may turn out to be as, or more, important than its explicit function. That is to say, a reference to myth may be introduced by the poet overtly to illumine one aspect of his experience, but may also allusively and implicitly cast light upon other, equally significant, aspects. Or again, myth may be brought in to illustrate one thing, but then, through its associations or the individual shape the elegist has lent it, suggest another, thus making a transition in thought or feeling in the elegy concerned.

It is myth used in these ways that we shall be considering in what follows. All three of the love-elegists exploit the complexity and plasticity of myth in the manner described above, but they do so to different extents and for different reasons. Propertius makes

---

7. We need constantly to remind ourselves how very many more sources of myth were readily accessible to the elegists (and to ancient artists generally) than are to us; and probably also how very many more variants there were of any individual myth than we will ever know.

very frequent use of mythological exempla; Tibullus uses myth sparingly (though more than is generally allowed); Ovid again introduces many exempla into his elegies. But Ovid, although he does take advantage of the complexity of myth for his own reasons, does so to a lesser degree than the earlier two elegists. And again, whereas Propertius and Tibullus, as we shall see, employ myth subtly and allusively to illumine important aspects of their personal experience, Ovid, even where he does bring myth into contact with what he presents as his own experience, does so mainly for purposes of wit.

In Chapter 1 we shall examine in some detail the background in Hellenistic poetry to the Roman love-elegists use of mythic exempla to achieve allusive and implicit effects. But what of earlier Greek poetry? The basic material here has been assembled by R. Öhler in his useful thesis *Mythologische Exempla in der Älteren Griechischen Dichtung* (Aarau 1925).[8] So far as the 'subjective' genres of poetry are concerned, I find among the material collected by Öhler only one case where an exemplum is used in the subtle manner later characteristic of the Roman elegists. This is the exemplum involving Atalante, in a piece in the collection of Theognidea (1283-94).[9] In the lines (1283-7) leading up to the mythological illustration, the author of these verses first pleads with the reluctant object of his desire, then threatens: ἀλλά σ' ἐγὼ τρώσω φεύγοντά με.

---

8. There is also a brief review of myth as used by the earlier Greek poets to illustrate personal experience, in Kölmel (*diss.cit.* n.1) pp.29-31.

9. As these lines occur in the *Mousa Paidike*, the suspect Book II of the Theognidean collection, it is doubtful whether they were composed by Theognis himself; and it is possible that they are as late as the Hellenistic period. (For a convenient and balanced summary of the problems posed by the Theognidea, see A.R. Burn, *The Lyric Age of Greece*, London 1960, pp.258-64.)

And this threat introduces the exemplum:

> . . . . . ὥς ποτέ φασιν
> Ἰασίου κούρην παρθένον Ἰασίην,
> ὡραίην περ ἐοῦσαν, ἀναινομένην γάμον ἀνδρῶν
> φεύγειν· ζωσαμένη δ' ἔργ' ἀτέλεστα τέλει
> πατρὸς νοσφισθεῖσα δόμων ξανθὴ Ἀταλάντη·
> ᾤχετο δ' ὑψηλὰς ἐς κορυφὰς ὀρέων
> φεύγουσ' ἱμερόεντα γάμον χρυσῆς Ἀφροδίτης
> δῶρα· τέλος δ' ἔγνω καὶ μάλ' ἀναινομένη. (Theognis, 1287-94)

The explicit point of connexion here between the myth and what precedes it is simply that, just as the poet's boy now flees, so the daughter of Iasius (Atalante) once fled from men. This comparison is made in the opening lines of the exemplum in the words ὥς ποτε .... φεύγειν. But the poet then goes on, in the manner of Homer in his similes, to develop his exemplum beyond the point of explicit comparison. Taking advantage of the complexity of myth, he draws the boy's (and the reader's) attention to further details of Atalante's history: she did all she could to avoid marriage, she actually left her father's home and went off into the high mountain peaks - nevertheless she was eventually compelled to yield to a lover. With that, without any further word to its addressee, this brief poem ends. But there is, quite clearly, an unstated implication in the last line of the exemplum: that the poet's boy, for all his reluctance, will have finally to yield to the poet's desire. The implicit function of the myth is thus seen to be as significant, if not more so, than its explicit function.[10]

As for the paradeigmatic use of myth in the 'objective' poetic genres during the earlier period of Greek poetry, it is only in certain of the myths of Pindar and certain exempla in the choruses of tragedy that we find something similar to the Theognidean

---

10. Kölmel (*diss.cit.* n.1) p.30 is wrong to dismiss the Theognidean Atalante as a mere exemplification of 'Sprödigkeit'. The case is, as we have seen, more complex than that.

treatment of the Atalante exemplum. Pindar of course dealt with myth in masterly fashion. In his hands it was almost wholly plastic. He exploited to the full its possibilities as a medium for reflecting, from a higher level, the manifold exploits of men. There is not the space here to demonstrate this in detail.[11] I just refer the reader, for example, to *Pythian* X,[12] where Pindar lends the myth of the Land of Hyperboreans, which occupies the central section of the ode, a complex meaning. Through the particular shape he imparts to the myth, the poet manages simultaneously to suggest that the condition of the Hyperboreans is sharply distinct from that of ordinary mortals (*cf.* 29 f. and 41-4) yet that it also somehow reflects the glory of the victorious athlete (the Ὑπερβορέων ἀγών, *l.*30, reflects the Pythian games; compare Apollo's appearances in and before the myth at 34 f. and 10; and compare lines 37-40 with 55-9).[13]

So far as the use of mythological exempla in tragedy is concerned, again we cannot go into detail here.[14] Most of the exempla enumerated by Öhler are used by the tragedians for pretty straightforward purposes of illustration, consolation, admonition, etc. But one case stands out: the three mythological παραδείγματα that constitute the fourth choral stasimon of Sophocles' *Antigone* (944-87).[15] The working of these exempla is

---

11. For such a demonstration see A. Köhnken, *Die Funktion des Mythos bei Pindar*, Berlin and New York 1971.

12. On which see Köhnken, *ibid.*, pp.158-87 (summarized on pp.220 f.).

13. For further examples of myth allusively handled, *cf.* the myths of *Olympians* I and VI and *Pythian* VIII which have similarly complex connexions with some aspect of the particular victor's situation.

14. For a discussion of exempla in Greek tragedy see Öhler (*diss.cit.* p.8) pp.78-111.

15. On which passage see the thorough discussion of G. Müller in his ed. of the *Antigone* (Heidelberg 1967) *ad loc.*

left wholly allusive by the dramatist; no explicit connexion with their context is made beyond very brief apostrophes to the absent Antigone in lines 948 and 987. Only from a careful reading does the purpose of the three mythic episodes become clear. We find, moreover, that this purpose is a many-sided one. On the one hand the three stories - each of which tells of the imprisonment of a royal person - seem intended to express *sympathy* for Antigone, who has herself been despatched to prison; but on the other hand, the central exemplum of the three, on close examination, is seen to imply a *criticism* not only of Antigone herself, but also, and to a far greater degree, of King Creon. Thus, without any explicit statement at all, Sophocles is able through the medium of mythological exempla to suggest a wealth of implicit meaning. Like the poet of the Theognidean piece and Pindar in the instances cited above, the dramatist here fully exploits the capacity of myth to express various, even conflicting, attitudes towards a particular human situation.

It is very difficult to tell just how much influence the earlier Greek poets had on the Roman love-elegists' use of myth.[16] However the case may be, we shall find

---

16. We may note, however, that at least Tibullus and Propertius seem to have read Pindar (Propertius at III,17,40 talks of the *os Pindaricum*, and at IV,4, 65 ff. seems to recall *Pythian* IX,23 ff. (*cf.* R.O.A.M. Lyne, 'Propertius 4,4,65 sqq. and Pindar Pyth.9.23 sqq.', *Hermes* 99, 1971, 376-8), while Tibullus I,7 has much of the form of an epinician ode). Again, all three elegists were no doubt acquainted with the works of so famous an author as Sophocles (Propertius on more than one occasion refers to the Theban cycle of myth which inspired some of Sophocles' best-known tragedies - *cf.* Prop.II,8,21-4; II,9,49 f.; II,34,37-40 - and Ovid at *Amores* I,15,15 mentions the dramatist by name). And they may also be presumed to have read their elegiac predecessors, including the Theognidea (Propertius I,1,9-16 and Ovid *Ars Amatoria* II,185-92 both reflect the version of the Atalante myth followed by 'Theognis' 1283-94, according to which the heroine was a huntress who lived in the wilds and was later tamed by a lover, rather than the version which made her an athlete won by the dropping of the Golden Apples).

the elegists handling myth in precisely those subtle and allusive ways glanced at above, and lending similarly complex functions to their mythological exempla in order to illumine different aspects of their personal experience in love.

Chapter 1

THE HELLENISTIC BACKGROUND

The present chapter has as its general purpose to delineate the background, in Hellenistic poetry, to the Roman love-elegists use of myth in their personal poems. Section (i), dealing with the Hellenistic catalogue-elegists and their forerunners, must perforce be mainly literary-historical in character. The material that will be discussed has been handled often enough in connexion with the *originality* of Roman love-elegy;[1] but we shall be examining it with specific reference to the Roman elegists *use of myth*. All that can be demonstrated with certainty here is that, in the case of some at least of the Greek elegists, mythological material was somehow linked to the author's personal experience in love. One wishes that one could analyze the *manner* in which these elegists established connexions between myth and their personal situation; and that one could compare their manner in this respect with that of Tibullus, Propertius and Ovid. But unfortunately, due to the scantiness of the evidence, such analyses and comparisons are impossible. We must be content with the ὅτι; any theory as to the ὡς must be purely speculative. Section (ii), in which certain uses of exempla by the greatest Hellenistic poets, Callimachus, Apollonius Rhodius and Theocritus, are examined, is more literary-critical in nature. It may be asked what relevance the exempla to be handled in this section have to the subject of this thesis, since not one of them (with the possible exception of the exemplum in Callimachus *Iambus* XII)[2] is used to illustrate the poet's personal situation. The answer is, as we shall see, that Callimachus, Apollonius and Theocritus made important

---

1. See the comprehensive article of F. Jacoby, 'Zur Entstehung der römischen Elegie', *RhM* 60, 1905, 38-105; also A.A. Day (*op.cit.* n.4) ch.1; A. Rostagni, 'L' influenza greca sulle origini dell' elegia erotica latina', in *Fondation Hardt, Entretiens* vol.II, Geneva 1956, pp.59-90.

2. See below, pp.32 ff.

developments in the *technique* of handling the mythological exemplum. They showed how, by building in all kinds of subtle and allusive links between them, the mythic illustration and its context could be mutually shaped so as to become inseparable, the one from the other; and hence how the mythological exemplum could be made an integral part of even a short poem or episode. Since these poems and episodes are, for the most part, preserved entire, comparison with the Roman love-elegists now becomes possible. It will be seen that the techniques for joining mythological exemplum and context developed by the three abovementioned Hellenistic poets, were taken over into their own poetry by the Augustan elegists - particularly Tibullus and Propertius - and used to forge strong links between myth and personal experience. Finally, Section (iii) will survey the use of myth in Hellenistic epigram, one genre of poetry at any rate that dealt, or purported to do so, with the poet's own life, his own feelings and emotions. It will be shown that the epigrammatists' employment of myth had little apparent influence on Propertius and Tibullus, but was most important for Ovid.

This chapter has also the following subsidiary aim. There exists no comprehensive monograph on Hellenistic mythology.[3] As far as the use of mythological exempla in the poetry of this time is concerned, R. Öhler's thesis, *Mythologische Exempla in der Älteren Griechischen Dichtung* (Aarau 1925) has a final section 'Ausblick auf die Weiterentwicklung der Exempla' (p.120) which touches on the Hellenistic period, but comprises a mere enumeration of some of the more important exempla - there is no discussion or analysis. So the fairly

---

3. We must be content with brief discussions by M.P. Nilsson, *Geschichte der Griechischen Religion*, Munich 1961, pp.54-61, and W. Meincke, *Untersuchungen zu den Enkomiastischen Gedichten Theokrits*, diss. Kiel 1965, Introduction 1), 'Die Klassiker der hellenistischen Zeit und ihr Verhältnis zum Mythos', both of whom bemoan the lack of a handbook on the subject. Meincke gives references to a few other short treatments of Hellenistic mythology, to which we may add H. Kleinknecht (*art.cit.* n.26) in particular pp.346-50.

lengthy treatment of certain exempla in this chapter, besides forming a preliminary to our handling of myth in Roman love-elegy, will also partially fill a small gap in the scholarly discussion of Hellenistic poetry.

(i) The Catalogue-Elegists and their Forerunners

Before discussing the important developments in the use of myth to illustrate personal experience made by the catalogue-elegists of Hellenistic times, we shall look first at the work of two earlier poets mentioned with enthusiasm by them.

MIMNERMUS[4] The first of these is Mimnermus, for whose connexion with Hellenistic poetry we have the testimony of Hermesianax and Alexander Aetolus (there is also, of course, Callimachus' mention of him, the exact significance of which is disputed, in the *Aetia* prologue).[5] Hermesianax lists him among the poets of antiquity who loved passionately -

> Μίμνερμος δέ, τὸν ἡδὺν ὃς εὕρετο πολλὸν ἀνατλὰς
> ἦχον καὶ μαλακοῦ πνεῦμα τὸ πενταμέτρου
> καίετο μὲν Ναννοῦς ... (fr.7 Powell, 35-7)

- while Alexander Aetolus mentions him in connexion with a Syracusan poet, Boeotus, who wrote parodies:

> ... Ἀρχαίων ἦν ὅδ' ἀνὴρ προγόνων,
> εἰδὼς ἐκ νεότητος ἀεὶ ξείνοισιν ὁμιλεῖν
> ξεῖνος, Μιμνέρμου δ' † εἰς ἔπος ἄκρον ἰὼν
> παιδομανεῖ σὺν ἔρωτι ποτὴν ἴσον † · κτλ. (fr.5 Powell, 2-5)

Mimnermus loved a flute-girl, Nanno, after whom one of his books of poetry is named, though whether he himself adopted the name for his volume or whether it was later attached by Alexandrian editors, is unknown.

---

4. On Mimnermus see Wilamowitz, *Sappho und Simonides*, Berlin 1913, pp.276-304 and A.A. Day, *The Origins of Latin Love-Elegy*, Oxford 1938, pp.2-10. Fragments are cited according to the numbering of West (who follows Bergk's numeration). Here, and in the introductory notes to the elegists who follow, I have taken for granted such standard works as *PW*, Susemihl, Schmid-Stählin and Lesky.

5. Callimachus, fr.1 (Pf.) line 11. See Trypanis *ad loc.* and M. Puelma, 'Die Vorbilder der Elegiendichtung in Alexandrien und Rom', *MH* 11, 1954, 101-16.

It is uncertain too whether the *Nanno* was one long narrative elegy or a collection of shorter elegiac poems.[6] What we do know from the fragments cited as coming from the *Nanno*, is that this book embraced many different subjects - mythological: in fr.4 Tithonus is mentioned as an example of hateful old age, in fr.12 the Sun is said to travel over the ocean, from his setting in the west to his rising in the east, in a golden bowl; historical: in frr.9 and 10 the founding of Kolophon and the capture of Smyrna are mentioned; and personal: fr.5, written in the first person, deals with the quick passing of youthful beauty and the hatefulness of old age, while fr.8, again in the first person, asks that truthfulness reign between the poet and an unnamed person (Nanno?; it is of course just possible that both frr.5 and 8 come from speeches of a third person). As far as the personal element in the poem or poems is concerned we have also the testimony of Hermesianax quoted above, that Mimnermus 'burned for Nanno', which would seem to imply - though we cannot be certain of this point - that the poet dealt directly with his love for her in the book *Nanno*.

Because of the uncertainty surrounding almost every aspect of Mimnermus' poetry it is impossible to assess exactly the importance of the *Nanno* for our purposes; we cannot tell to what extent (if at all) myth was used within this book to illustrate the personal experience of the poet. We must be content with the observation that Mimnermus combined personal and mythological themes within the compass of a single poem/collection of poems, and that he is mentioned with approval by the later catalogue-elegists Alexander Aetolus and Hermesianax.

---

6. On these points see Wilamowitz *op.cit.*, pp.286 f.

ANTIMACHUS[7] The second forerunner of Hellenistic catalogue-elegy who must be dealt with, is Antimachus. He is mentioned immediately after Mimnermus in the catalogue of lover-poets of Hermesianax (who came from the same city as Antimachus and Mimnermus, namely Kolophon):

> Λυδῆς δ' Αντίμαχος Λυδηίδος ἐκ μὲν ἔρωτος
> πληγεὶς Πακτωλοῦ ῥεῦμ' ἐπέβη ποταμοῦ·
> †δαρδανη δὲ θανοῦσαν ὑπὸ ξηρὴν θέτο γαῖαν
> κλαίων, αιζαον† δ' ἦλθεν ἀποπρολιπὼν
> ἄκρην ἐς Κολοφῶνα, γόων δ' ἐνεπλήσατο βίβλους
> ἰρᾶς, ἐκ παντὸς παυσάμενος καμάτου. (fr.7 Powell, 41-6)

Mimnermus and Antimachus are again found together in the opening couplet of an epigram of Poseidippus -

> Νανnοῦς καὶ Λύδης ἐπίχει δύο καὶ †φερεκάστου
> Μιμνέρμου καὶ τοῦ σώφρονος Αντιμάχου
> (Wyss test.15 = *A.P.* XII, 168)

- where, we should note, the *Nanno* and Antimachus' *Lyde* are mentioned in the same breath, implying some sort of similarity between them. There was little we could say with certainty about the *Nanno* except that it contained personal and mythological themes; we could find no evidence that Mimnermus actually used myth to illustrate his personal experience. We know of Antimachus' *Lyde* at any rate that it was a single elegiac poem (Wyss, t7 and t8) in at least two books (fr.72 Wyss), probably many more (he had a reputation for longwindedness in antiquity, Wyss t30 and t36). Like Mimnermus' *Nanno* the *Lyde* seems to have contained both mythological and personal themes (there is no evidence for historical themes of the sort found in the *Nanno*). Of the mythological subjects we know of the voyage and return of the Argonauts (frr.56-65), the story of Bellerophon (frr.68-9) and details of the Oedipus myth (fr.70).

---

7. For Antimachus we possess the invaluable collection of testimonia and fragments, and discussion, of B. Wyss, *Antimachi Colophonii Reliquiae*, Berlin 1936. (West follows Wyss' numeration.) See further Wilamowitz, *Hellenistische Dichtung*, Berlin 1924, vol.I, pp.101-3; Day (*op.cit.* n.4) pp.10-14; H. Trüb, *Kataloge in der Griechische Dichtung*, diss. Zurich 1952, pp.74-6.

Thus, in view of the words of Ps.-Plutarch quoted below, it would appear that Antimachus in his *Lyde* dealt with the unhappy love-stories of Medea and Jason, Bellerophon and Anteia or Stheneboia, and Oedipus and Jocasta.[8]

The importance of Antimachus so far as we are concerned, lies in the fact that, although we have no direct evidence, we do possess important *in*direct evidence, that myth and personal experience came into contact within his *Lyde*. The opening lines of Ovid's *Tristia* I,6 -

> Nec tantum Clario est Lyde dilecta poetae,
> nec tantum Coo Bittis amata suo est,
> pectoribus quantum tu nostris, uxor, inhaeres (t5 Wyss)

- together with the lines of Hermesianax quoted above, clearly indicate that Antimachus spoke directly of his love for Lyde in the elegy. Furthermore, there is an important notice concerning the *Lyde* in Ps.-Plutarch:

> ἐχρήσατο δὲ τῇ τοιαύτῃ ἀγωγῇ καὶ Αντίμαχος
> ὁ ποιητής· ἀποθανούσης γὰρ τῆς γυναικὸς αὐτῷ
> Λύδης, πρὸς ἣν φιλοστόργως εἶχε, παραμύθιον
> τῆς λύπης αὐτῷ ἐποίησε τὴν ἐλεγείαν τὴν
> καλουμένην Λύδην, ἐξαριθμησάμενος τὰς ἡρωικὰς
> συμφορὰς, τοῖς ἀλλοτρίοις κακοῖς ἐλάττω τὴν
> ἑαυτοῦ ποιῶν λύπην. (*cons.ad Apoll.*9 p.106 b = t7 Wyss)

From all this evidence taken together we may infer that Antimachus expressed his grief at the death of his beloved[9] Lyde in the poem of the same name, and used myths of the sufferings of heroes in some way to illustrate his own grief. On the evidence of t7 (Wyss) and the fragments, it would seem that personal experience merely provided the starting-point for a lengthy display of mythological erudition and that the link between the

---

8. Other mythological episodes possibly dealt with in the *Lyde* are the Sun's journey in a golden bowl (fr.66 Wyss; the same story occurred in Mimnermus' *Nanno*, see above, p.16) and Hades' rape of Persephone and the wanderings of Ceres (see Wyss p.xxi and on frr.67 and 72).

9. Wyss (p.iv) believes 'Lyde' was the name of an *amica* of the poet, and that Ps.-Plut. assumes her to have been his wife simply out of prudery.

two was tenuous.[10] It must be admitted, however, that the precise manner in which Antimachus used stories drawn from myth as a παραμύθιον τῆς λύπης αὐτῷ, the most important point for our purposes, still remains unknown.

Antimachus' adoption of the elegiac metre for an extended narrative poem[11] and his recitation at length of miscellaneous heroic myths within a framework of personal experience, seem to have had a decisive influence on later Hellenistic mythological-catalogue-elegists. (The continuation by these poets of the tradition of the long narrative elegy stemming from Antimachus, will be discussed immediately below.) But as far as his influence on the Roman elegists' use of myth to illustrate personal experience is concerned, we have to conclude that it cannot be accurately assessed on the present state of the evidence.

HERMESIANAX[12] Following on in the tradition of his fellow-countryman, Antimachus, Hermesianax (his *floruit* was probably during the *Hochhellenismus* c.300-250 B.C.) wrote a long narrative elegy in three books called after his mistress Leontion, as the *Nanno* of Mimnermus and the *Lyde* of Antimachus had been named after women beloved of those poets. This much we know from remarks in Athenaeus that preface a long quotation from the *Leontion*:

---

10. But *cf.* R. Heinze: 'Wieviel der [*sc.*Katalog-Dichter] von eigenem Erlebnis und eigenem Empfinden geboten hat, können wir nicht sagen; aber es scheint fast undenkbar, dass das eigene Erlebnis, welches die Wahl der Stoffe bestimmte, nicht auch die Behandlung der Stoffe bis zu einem gewissen Grade beeinflusst haben sollte.' (*Ovids Elegische Erzählung, Ber. Sächs. Akad. d. Wiss.* 71 bd. 1919, p.87).

11. If Mimnermus' *Nanno* was a collection of elegies rather than a single poem, then Antimachus must be regarded as the εὑρετής of the long narrative elegy.

12. Fragments collected by Powell; for discussions of Hermesianax see Day (*op.cit.* n.4) pp.19-22 and H. Trüb (*diss.cit.* n.7) pp.70-3.

παρέλιπον δὲ καὶ ... τὴν Ἑρμησιάνακτος τοῦ Κολοφωνίου Λεόντιον· ἀπὸ γὰρ ταύτης ἐρωμένης αὐτῷ γενομένης ἔγραψεν ἐλεγειακὰ τρία βιβλία, ὧν ἐν τῷ τρίτῳ κατάλογον ποιεῖται ἐρωτικῶν ...

(Athenaeus xiii.597B; quoted by Powell on fr.7)

It is a fairly safe inference from these words that Hermesianax's *Leontion* contained some element of personal emotion in the form of an expression of the poet's love for his mistress, but again the evidence for this inference is not direct. What little we do know directly, from the fragments, of the poem's content suggests that mythological and quasi-biographical material predominated over any personal themes the elegy contained. Each of the three books of the *Leontion* seems to have comprised different sorts of love-story.[13] The first book apparently told of the unsuccessful loves of rustics, of Daphnis' love of Menalcas (fr.2 Powell), Menalcas' love of Kenaia (fr.3) and possibly of Polyphemus' love of Galatea (fr.1); the second book contained the story of Arceophon's tragic love of Arsinoe (fr.4) and possibly other tales of the unhappy loves of royal persons, ascribed to Hermesianax by various authors, like Leucippus' love of his sister (fr.5) and Nanis' love of Cyrus (fr.6); in the third book the loves of poets and philosophers were catalogued. The extensive passage (fr.7) quoted by Athenaeus comes from this last book and is instructive in that it shows us something of Hermesianax's methods of composition. We can see that he imitated closely the manner of Hesiod in his *Eoiae* and *Great Eoiae*, mechanically linking sections by means of the formula οἵη (*ll.*1 and 85; *cf.* also οἷα, 57, and οἵῳ, 89). Lines 1-78 of fr.7, beginning with οἵην, simply list as if in an inventory the loves of poets. These lines are followed by a brief six-line introduction to the next section, which, opening again with οἵη, then lists in much the same way the loves of philosophers. The only personal touch to be found in all this appears in several apostrophes

---

13. For the content of these books see Powell's comments *ad locc.*

(*ll*.49, 73 and 75) presumably to Leontion herself.[14] If the other books of the poem were as dry as fr.7 would lead us to expect, the *Leontion* as a whole must have made extraordinarily arid reading.

The importance of Hermesianax from our point of view is purely formal. It lies in the fact that he made extensive use of mythology in an elegiac poem and presumably (this is not absolutely certain) connected that mythology to his personal experience in love. To this extent, from a literary-historical point of view, he is important for any study of the background to the Roman love-elegists' use of myth.

PHANOCLES[15] The elegist Phanocles is mentioned here only because he appears to have carried on the tradition of the long narrative elegiac poem cataloguing mythological love-stories and because he may have had some slight influence on Propertius and Ovid.[16] We know neither Phanocles' place of origin nor date (though it seems most likely he wrote in the 3rd c.B.C.).[17] On the evidence of the fragments it would appear that his poem, Ἔρωτες ἢ Καλοί, was an elegiac catalogue of the loves of gods and heroes for beautiful boys. We hear of Orpheus' love of Calais (fr.1 Powell), Dionysus' rape of Adonis (fr.3), Tantalus' of Ganymede (fr.4), Agamemnon's infatuation with Argynnus (fr.5), and Cycnus' grief for Phaethon (fr.6) - the various stories being mechanically connected, in Hesiodic fashion, by ἢ ὡς (this formula introduces the long fr.1 and possibly also fr.3). The fragments further show that

---

14. *Cf.* R. Heinze (*op.cit.* n.10) p.88.

15. Fragments in Powell; for discussion see Day (*op. cit.* n.4) pp.24-6 and H. Trüb (*diss.cit.* n.7) pp.73 f.

16. Phanocles related how the temple of Aphrodite Argynnis was established by Agamemnon on account of his beloved, Argynnos (fr.5 Powell). Propertius refers to the story of Agamemnon and Argynnos in III,7,21 ff. Ovid in recounting Cycnus' devotion to Phaethon in *Met*.II,367 ff., may also have followed Phanocles (see Lact.Plac. *ad loc.* = fr.6 Powell).

17. See *OCD s.v.* 'Phanocles'.

Phanocles had the typically Hellenistic interest in *recherché* erotic mythology, aetiology (see frr.1 and 5) and metamorphosis (see fr.6).

Since Phanocles' book Ἔρωτες ἢ Καλοί is not named after a particular person, as are the books of all three poets discussed above, it is reasonable to suppose that it contained no personal reference. Only fr.2 -

> ἀλλὰ τὸ Μοιράων νῆμ' ἄλλυτον, οὐδέ τῳ ἔστιν
> ἐκφυγέειν, ὁπόσοι γῆν ἐπιφερβόμεθα

- could be spoken by the poet *in propria persona* referring to his own circumstances; but these words could just as well be a general comment by him on the events of the poem, or be spoken by one of the characters therein. Once more the fragmentary nature of the evidence permits us to draw only tentative conclusions. The importance of Phanocles for our purposes is simply that he used erotic mythology extensively in an elegiac poem and was probably read by Propertius and Ovid.

ALEXANDER AETOLUS[18] We have already mentioned Alexander Aetolus above in connection with his notice of Mimnermus in one of his elegiac poems.[19] Alexander seems to have been a true exponent of πολυειδία in his works: besides two elegies we know also of epyllia, epigrams, mimes and tragedies by this versatile poet. Of more interest from our point of view, than the *Muses* (which seems to have contained neither personal nor erotic-mythological themes) is his other elegy, the *Apollo*, apparently an elegiac catalogue of love-stories with unhappy endings.[20] With characteristically Hellenistic love of the oblique and indirect manner, Alexander has cast the stories in the form of prophecies by Apollo. All this may be inferred from the long

---

18. Fragments in Powell; brief discussion in Day (*op. cit.* n.4) pp.22-4 and Gow and Page (edd.), *Hellenistic Epigrams*, Cambridge 1965, vol.II, p.27.
19. Probably the *Muses*; see Powell on fr.5.
20. On this poem see L. Hensel, *Weissagungen in der Alexandrinischen Poesie*, diss. Giessen 1908, pp.37-40.

fragment of the *Apollo* quoted by Parthenius (XIV) which deals with Kleoboia's unrequited love of Antheus, subsequent murder of him and suicide, all narrated entirely in the future tense.[21] If the 34 lines in which the whole story of Antheus and Kleoboia is told, were more or less the average length of the episodes contained in the elegy, there must have been a fair number of them. It is uncertain whether Alexander used the Hesiodic οἵη or ἥ ὡς to effect transitions as did Hermesianax, writing probably about the same time as him, and Phanocles, after (?) him.

It seems unlikely that an elegy written in the form of a series of prophecies and named after the god Apollo rather than a mistress, should have contained any personal reference.[22] Thus our conclusions about Alexander Aetolus are the same as those above, about Phanocles, except that we have no definite indication that the Roman love-elegists actually read Alexander.

The fragmentary nature of our evidence allows us to reach no absolutely definite conclusions concerning the importance of Mimnermus, Antimachus and the Hellenistic catalogue-elegists for the Roman love-elegists' use of myth in their personal poetry. We can only reiterate that, so far as the evidence goes, certain of the catalogue-elegists and their forerunners would appear

---

21. A common stylistic device in this period; see, besides Hensel (*ibid.*), L. Deubner, 'Ein Stilprinzip hellenisticher Dichtkunst', *N.Jb.Kl.Alt.* 47, 1921, 361-78, sec.I; and *cf.* also the Aktaion-exemplum in Callimachus *Hymn* V (discussed below, pp.25 ff.).

22. Hensel, however, (following Meineke) conjectures that Alexander *may* have talked of his own love-experience: 'Vielleicht hat ... Alexander eine Einleitung fingiert, die ihm die Berechtigung gab, den Apollo vortragen zu lassen.' (*ibid.*p.39). So too Heinze (*op.cit.* n.10) p.90: 'Möglich, dass Alexander der Aetoler in seinem "Apollon" das Motiv von der eigenen Person auf den Gott übertragen und ihn etwa zum Trost in eigenem Liebesleid ... eine Reihe von leidvollen Liebesgeschichten hat erzählen lassen.'

to have been the first ancient poets extensively to employ myth in connection with their own experience in love. So it was presumably they who inspired the Roman love-elegists' widespread use of myth to illustrate personal experience in *their* poems. So much seems fairly certain - anything further is speculation. If, however, we may be permitted to speculate briefly, two conjectures suggest themselves. It may be that the catalogue-elegists' rather mechanical use of connecting devices like ἢ οἵη lies behind such sequences of connectives as *qualis ... qualis ... qualis ... talis* (Prop.I,3,1-7; also Ovid *Am.*I,10,1-7) and *non ita ... nec sic ... nec sic ... nec sic ... quanta* (Prop.II,14, 1-9) used to link mythological exempla to some point of the poet's experience, in Augustan love-elegy.[23] We may further conjecture that it is in poems such as Propertius III,15 and Ovid *Am.*III,6, i.e. in poems where myth greatly predominates over the personal experience it illustrates, that the influence of the catalogue-elegists is strongest.[24] Rostagni may have been correct (although I would not agree with the judgment implied by 'pretesto ed espediente accessorio') when he concluded:

> '... ai fini della valutazione storico-letteraria veramente importa è il rovesciamento delle parti verificatosi nel tipo dell' elegia erotica in Roma: per cui l'amore personale dell'autore, ch'era nei modelli greci semplice pretesto, diventò qui oggetto essenziale del canto; e il mito, ch'era oggetto essenziale, si ridusse a pretesto ed espediente accessorio.'[25]

---

23. *Cf.* A. La Penna, *L'Integrazione Difficile: Un Profilo di Properzio*, Turin 1977, p.201.

24. On Prop.III,15 as being in the tradition of Hellenistic narrative-elegy, see R. Heinze (*op.cit.* n.10) pp.85 f.; and for an appreciation of the significance of the myth therein, C. Macleod, 'A Use of Myth in Ancient Poetry', *CQ* XXIV, 1974, 82-93, pp.92 f. Ovid *Am.*III,6 is discussed below, in Chapter 5, pp.185 f. Poems like Theocritus' *Hylas* (XIII) and its imitation, Prop.I,20, were perhaps also influenced by catalogue-elegy.

25. A. Rostagni, 'L'influenza greca sulle origini dell' elegia erotica latina', in *Fondation Hardt, Entretiens* vol.II, Geneva 1956, 59-90, p.82. Jacoby (*op.cit.* n.1) pp.57 f. reached a similar conclusion.

(ii) Callimachus, Apollonius Rhodius, Theocritus

CALLIMACHUS We come now to the paragon of Hellenistic poets, Callimachus, who made innovations in the use of exempla which seem to have been of great importance for his elegiac followers in Augustan Rome. Callimachus' new manner of using the exemplum will be analyzed in two instances, first in his *Hymn* V, second in *Iambus* XII.

In *Hymn* V, the Λουτρὰ τῆς Παλλάδος,[26] an exemplum of twelve lines occurs at 107-18:

πόσσα μὲν ἃ Καδμηὶς ἐς ὕστερον ἔμπυρα καυσεῖ,
πόσσα δ' Ἀρισταῖος, τὸν μόνον εὐχόμενοι
παῖδα, τὸν ἀβατὰν Ἀκταίονα, τυφλὸν ἰδέσθαι.
καὶ τῆνος μεγάλας σύνδρομος Ἀρτέμιδος
ἔσσεται· ἀλλ' οὐκ αὐτὸν ὅ τε δρόμος αἵ τ' ἐν ὄρεσσι
δυσεῦνται ξυναὶ τᾶμος ἐκαβολίαι,
ὁππόταν οὐκ ἐθέλων περ ἴδῃ χαρίεντα λοετρά
δαίμονος· ἀλλ' αὐταὶ τὸν πρὶν ἄνακτα κύνες
τουτάκι δειπνησεῦντι· τὰ δ' υἱέος ὀστέα μάτηρ
λεξεῖται δρυμὼς πάντας ἐπερχομένα·
ὀλβίσταν δ' ἐρέει σε καὶ εὐαίωνα γενέσθαι
ἐξ ὀρέων ἁλαὸν παῖδ' ὑποδεξαμέναν.

Immediately before the mythological illustration, Athena, offering consolation to Chariclo, mother of the stricken Teiresias, and to her son, addresses both in turn explaining first to the mother that her son's blindness was fated, and then mentioning in a brief aside to the son (105 f.) a reward due to him. In the next line Athena introduces the exemplum containing the story of Aktaion which has in it something of consolation for both mother and son. But before examining the detailed working and content of the exemplum, we must first focus our attention on its deliberately formal structure.

In form the mythological exemplum is a ring-composition of precisely the same kind as many to be

---

26. We are fortunate to possess the thorough analysis of this poem (to which I am much indebted) by H. Kleinknecht, Λουτρὰ τῆς Παλλάδος, *Hermes* 74, 1939, 301-50; see also K.J. McKay, *The Poet at Play, Kallimachos, the Bath of Pallas*, Leiden 1962.

found in Homer.[27] Indeed, so close is the resemblance that it seems certain Callimachus had Homer in mind when composing the Aktaion-exemplum. Ring-composition as employed by Homer, and specifically in his mythological examples, is described by Willcock:

> 'Basically ring-composition simply means that a digression repeats at its end the statement made at its beginning. When, as often, it is used in a paradeigma, the system becomes a five-part one; Nestle (*Hermes* 77, 1942, p.66 n.2) describes it as thesis - reason - narrative - reason - thesis.'[28]

Now this is precisely the form of the Aktaion-exemplum in Callimachus *Hymn* V. In 103-6 -

> δῖα γύναι, τὸ μὲν οὐ παλινάγρετον αὖθι γένοιτο
> ἔργον, ἐπεὶ Μοιρᾶν ὧδ' ἐπένησε λίνα,
> ἀνίκα τὸ πρᾶτόν νιν ἐγείναο· νῦν δὲ νομίζευ,
> ὦ Εὐηρείδα, τέλθος ὀφειλόμενον.

-preceding the mythological illustration, and in 119-20 -

> ὦ ἐτάρα, τῷ μή τι μινύρεο· τῷδε γὰρ ἄλλα
> τεῦ χάριν ἐξ ἐμέθεν πολλὰ μενεῦντι γέρα,

- following it, Callimachus concentrates the reader's attention on the particular detail the exemplum is used to reinforce (thesis), namely Athena's attempt to comfort Chariclo and her son. In 103-6 this takes the form of an explanation that Teiresias' blinding was inevitable and mention of a τέλθος ὀφειλόμενον due to him, while at 119 f. Athena says simply ὦ ἐτάρα, τῷ μή τι μινύρεο and once more mentions rewards due to Teiresias. Again as in a number of Homeric exempla, so in Callimachus' story of Aktaion, the main point of the story (reason) - that Aktaion's parents would actually be *glad* to see their son suffer Teiresias' fate - is stressed both at the opening and close of the exemplum proper. At 107-9 Athena says that Aktaion's parents

---

27. The various types of exempla used by Homer are listed and discussed by R. Öhler (*diss.cit.*p.14) pp.5-30; see also M.M. Willcock, 'Mythological Paradeigma in the *Iliad*', *CQ* XIV, 1964, 141-54.

28. Willcock, *ibid.*, p.142. Some instances of Homeric exempla conforming to this pattern are *Iliad* I, 259-74; VI, 128-41; XXIV, 601-19.

(both are referred to here) will pray to see their son blind, while in 117 f. she says his mother (his father is not mentioned) will call Chariclo blessed inasmuch as she received her son from the hills blind (but alive). And again as in Homer, the lines in between this opening and close, occupying the centre of the exemplum (narrative), narrate the background to the story of Aktaion's parents' prayers and his mother's avowal. The general form of the Aktaion-exemplum is thus exactly after the Homeric pattern.

There are, however, two important ways in which Callimachus has consciously varied his Homeric models in order to create new effects. The first and most obvious variation lies in his casting of the deliberately archaic form of the exemplum, in that favourite medium of Hellenistic narrative, the elegiac metre.[29] The reader is clearly meant to savour the contrast between the epic structure of the exemplum, deriving from Homer, and its presentation in elegiacs by Callimachus. The technique of using elegiacs for hexametric forms did not, of course, originate with Callimachus, but by employing it with the consummate skill he displays here (and in the *Aetia*) he made it his own. The second way in which the Homeric models are varied, appears to be a bold invention of the poet. Whereas in Homer (and in literature generally) exempla invariably refer to *past* occurrences, in Callimachus' *Hymn* V the Aktaion-exemplum introduced by Athena refers forward to *future* events.[30] The poet gives this wholly original twist to the exemplum simply by having Athena speak in the role of omniscient goddess. In *ll.*100-6 she displays knowledge of the decrees of Kronos and the Fates, and hints at some foreknowledge of Teiresias' fate; and again in lines 120-30, following the mythological illustration, she continues in the prophetic mode she has adopted to tell the story of Aktaion, revealing to

---

29. For Callimachus' use of the elegiac metre in *Hymn* V as a whole see K.J. McKay (*op.cit.* n.26) pp.77-81.

30. *Cf.* H. Kleinknecht (*art.cit.* n.26) p.334.

Teiresias what the future holds in store for him.[31] Callimachus introduces a further refinement into his use in *Hymn* V of the 'futurischen Stil': he has Aktaion's mother, Autonoe, one of the characters of the exemplum, make reference to the experience of Chariclo (*ll.*117 f.) which is, for her, in the past and which *her own* (Autonoe's) experience has been introduced to illustrate. The effect is like that of one mirror reflecting its reflection in another.

If we turn now to the content of the Aktaion-exemplum, we will see just how far Callimachus has moved away from Homer. It has been noted by both Öhler and Willcock[32] that Homer, when he uses exempla, is careful to ensure that there are sufficient points of contact between the mythological episodes related and the matter requiring illustration, for the exempla to be effective. In Callimachus' Aktaion-exemplum not only are there a number of general points of resemblance of this kind but there are, further, many verbal echoes binding the mythological illustration even more closely to its poetic context. Moreover, while Homer seems frequently to adapt the content of the stories used as exempla, to fit the point requiring illustration, we will see that Callimachus has manipulated not only the story of Aktaion which constitutes the exemplum, but also the myth of Athena, Chariclo and Teiresias which it illustrates. By mutually adapting exemplum *and* context the poet ensures that they marry exactly. His

---

31. Reference has already been made above (n.21) to the predilection of Hellenistic poets for the prophetic style. Deubner, *art.cit.*, p.366 mentions the Aktaion-exemplum among the specimens of Callimachus' 'futurischen Stil' and aptly adduces the speech of the crow in the *Hekale* (fr.260 Pf.), where the crow seems to refer forward to the raven's future fate, parallel to its own. Another interesting point to note is that in his imitation of this passage, Nonnus (*Dionysiaca* V, 337-47) reverses the temporal relationship of illustration and point illustrated, by having the dying Aktaion cite Teiresias' happier fate as an exemplum.

32. R. Öhler (*diss.cit.*p.14) pp.5-30 *passim*; M.M. Willcock (*art.cit.* n.27) *passim*.

reasons for wanting a perfect correspondence between *illustrans* and *illustrandum* will be examined below. But first let us look at the general points of resemblance and verbal echoes.[33]

It should be noted that both Teiresias and Aktaion are represented as young, in fact of almost identical age (cp. *ll.*75 f. with *l.*109); both are of Theban parentage; both while hunting in the Boeotian mountains see a goddess bathing and are punished. The verbal echoes extend even to small details. Both lads are called παῖδες by the poet (cp. *ll.*82; 87; 92 f. with *l.*109), both are represented as hunting with dogs - Teiresias is said to be ranging ἀμᾶ κυσίν (*l.*75), while the κύνες of Aktaion are mentioned at *l.*114. Kleinknecht further points out a 'durchgehende ὄρος - Motiv' (p.335) occurring in both exemplum and context which underlines the similarity of the situations portrayed in both. The word ὄρος recurs in the lines leading up to the exemplum (72; 74; 90) and is repeated in different forms within it (ὄρεσσι 111, ὀρέων 118). Finally, there are very important verbal echoes in *ll.*78 and 113. Both lines contain the phrase οὐκ ἐθέλων emphatically completing the hemiepes, together with some form of the verb ὁρᾶν: *l.*78, οὐκ ἐθέλων δ' εἶδε τὰ μὴ θεμιτά; *l.*113, ὁππόταν οὐκ ἐθέλων περ ἴδῃ χαρίεντα λοετρὰ/ δαίμονος (cp. also the poet's warning to bystanders, *l.*52 : φράζεο μὴ οὐκ ἐθέλων τὰν βασίλειαν ἴδῃς). The echoes here point to an important similarity between the cases of Teiresias and Aktaion, namely that neither was motivated by hybris, both offended unwittingly. Just why Callimachus deliberately calls our attention to this point, will emerge later.

Second, the poet's mutual adaptation of myth and context must be examined. Here we come up against a difficulty: we know that Callimachus derived his story of Teiresias' blinding from a version of the myth found

---

33. Both are pointed out by Kleinknecht, pp.334-6.

in Pherekydes,[34] but his account of *Aktaion's* punishment differs from all known versions earlier than his own. A further difficulty, related to this one, is what the origin of Pherekydes' version of Teiresias' blinding was, since only he attributes it to Teiresias' having seen Athena naked. Wilamowitz solved these problems, to his own satisfaction at least, by contending that the version of the myth of Aktaion as we find it in Callimachus was not invented by the poet but was of early date; and that Pherekydes based his story of Teiresias' punishment on the supposedly earlier myth of Aktaion. In defence of this theory he asks rhetorically:

> 'Passt es sich für Athena im Walde zu spazieren und in einer Quelle zu baden oder für die Jägerin Artemis? Hat Athena wie jene einen Chor von Gespielen um sich? Und ist der Abklatsch nicht deutlich, wenn Teiresias auf die Jagd gehen muss?'[35]

Zieliński,[36] however, acutely points out that Wilamowitz seems not to have observed *that none of these three details occurs in the Pherekydean version*; so far as we know they are all Callimachean inventions. On the available evidence therefore, we must conclude that Callimachus has invented his version of the Aktaion-myth (modelling it on the Teiresias story), and *in addition* has imported into Pherekydes' account of Teiresias' blinding various details which suit his purpose in *Hymn* V. His immediate aim in making Teiresias a hunter and in having Aktaion punished for inadvertently seeing Artemis naked (rather than for some act of impiety, as in earlier versions) is clearly to make the exemplum fit the point it illustrates exactly; and it is to the same

---

34. See Pher. fr.92a (Jacoby), given by Apollodorus (*Library* III,19): ... Φερεκύδης δὲ ὑπὸ Ἀθηνᾶς αὐτὸν τυφλωθῆναι. οὖσαν γὰρ τὴν Χαρικλὼ τῇ Ἀθηνᾷ <...> γυμνὴν ἐπὶ πάντα ἰδεῖν· τὴν δὲ ταῖς χερσὶ τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς αὐτοῦ καταλαβουμένην πηρὸν ποιῆσαι. Χαρικλοῦς δὲ δεομένης ἀποκαταστῆσαι πάλιν τὰς ὁράσεις, μὴ δυναμένην ταῦτα ποιῆσαι.

35. Wilamowitz, *Hellenistische Dichtung* vol.II, Berlin 1924, p.23.

36. T. Zieliński, 'De Tiresiae Actaeonisque Infortuniis', *Eos* XXIX, 1926, 1-7.

end that the poet establishes close parallels between the goddesses seen by the two young men, by giving to Athena attributes (all those thought by Wilamowitz to have been imported by Pherekydes into *his* version) normally associated with Artemis. One final Callimachean addition to the myth which constitutes the exemplum must be mentioned. This is the prominent role he assigns to Autonoe, mother of Aktaion, in *ll.*115-18, where he represents her as wandering through the woods collecting her son's bones[37] and calling Chariclo blessed for having received her son home blind. The poet's intention is once again clear; it is to assign to Aktaion's mother a part in the story of his destruction as important as the part played by Chariclo in the story of *her* son's blinding. In this way yet another close parallel is established between the characters of the mythological illustration and those of the surrounding context.

We are now in a position to examine more closely the reasons for which Callimachus has introduced the Aktaion-exemplum. Its explicit purpose which has already been dealt with above, is to offer some comfort to Chariclo and to her son. (This is made plain by 103-6 and by the injunction ὦ ἐτάρα, τῷ μή τι μινύρεο at 119). Clearly, the ring-form of the mythological illustration and all the detailed parallels between the story involving Athena, Chariclo and Teiresias and that involving Artemis, Autonoe and Aktaion, help towards achieving this end. There is, however, also an important *implicit* purpose underlying the exemplum which seems far more significant than the explicit one. The matter is well stated by Kleinknecht:

---

37. This detail occurs in no version of the myth before Callimachus. Kleinknecht is, however, not quite correct when he says 'Nur bei Kallimachos ist überliefert, wie die unglückliche Mutter des Aktaion im Waldgebirge umherrirt, um die Gebeine ihres einzigen Kindes zusammenzulesen.' (p.338). This circumstance occurs also in Nonnus, *Dionysiaca* V, 539-51.

> 'Alle bewusste Parallelisierung der beiden Sagen, alle wechselseitige Bezugnahme im einzelnen dient ... dazu, den Gegensatz im Ausgang in seiner vollen Schärfe hervortreten zu lassen. Auf der einen Seite stehen die χάριϛ und das γέραϛ (120), auf der anderen die Zerreissung, das δεῖπνον der Hündinnen, die unbarmherzige Grausamkeit.' (p.338)

This very strong contrast between the fates of Teiresias and Aktaion serves to bring into prominence the respective reactions of Athena and Artemis to the unwitting offence of each. In circumstances which the poet is careful to make virtually identical, the mere son of her favourite is richly rewarded by Athena, while the favourite himself of Artemis is metamorphosed into a stag (there is an allusion to this detail in the phrase τὸν πρὶν ἄνακτα, *l*.114) and torn to pieces by his own dogs, since the goddess is either unwilling or unable to help him. In this way the exemplum serves to reinforce the important implicit purpose of the Teiresias story (and of the poem as a whole) which is to stress the power, tempered by humanity, of Athena - in sharp contrast to the old Pherekydean myth according to which the goddess punished Teiresias by tearing out his eyes with her own hands, and then was unable to alter what she had done.

Just as subtle and allusive as the Aktaion-exemplum is the mythological illustration introduced by Callimachus into his *Iambus* XII.[38] *Iambus* XII is unfortunately in a fragmentary state, but enough of the poem, together with the relevant *Diegesis*, is preserved for us to be able to make sense of it.

---

38. The text followed below is that of Pfeiffer, fr.202 together with the important *Addendum* in vol.II. For discussion of the poem see R. Pfeiffer, *Die Neuen* ΔΙΗΓΗΣΕΙΣ *zu Kallimachosgedichten*, Munich 1934, ch.IV; M. Puelma, *Lucilius und Kallimachos*, Frankfurt 1949, pp.289-92; C.M. Dawson, 'The Iambi of Callimachus', *YCIS* XI, 1950, 3-168 (the *Iambi* edited with commentary). Dawson's text of *Iambus* XII was constituted without the aid of *P.Mich. inv.* 4947, containing most of lines 57-70, printed by Pfeiffer in his *Addenda*.

The *Diegesis* to this poem tells us that Callimachus wrote it for the seventh-day celebration[39] of a little girl, daughter of a friend of his, Leon, and that in it:

> φησιν διενεγκεῖν τῶν † δεμυηθεντων (Pfeiffer suggests διαμοιρηθέντων or διανεμηθέντων) τῇ Ἥβῃ ὑπὸ τῶν ἄλλων θεῶν τὸν ᾀσθέντα ὑπὸ τοῦ Ἀπόλλωνος ὕμνον. (*Dieg.*IX, 27-31)

It is only shortly before this story of the gods' rivalry at Hebe's seventh day celebration begins, that the fragmentary text of the poem becomes intelligible. At *ll.*18-20 the poet says:

> τοὔνεκ' ἀντήσ[αιτε] πρηεῖαι, θεαί,
> τῆσδ' ἑτῆς' εὐχῇ [σι]· ·.ᾳεισομαι
> Μοῦσα τῇ μικκῇ τι τέ .. ηναι μελ[

Here Callimachus seems first of all to address the Fates (to whom reference is apparently made also in *l.*9, see Pfeiffer *ad loc.*) asking them as the presiding deities of this celebration to accept his gift, the 'song' that follows immediately. He then invokes the muse and begins the song, telling the story of Hebe mentioned above. So far as we can see, this mythological episode comprising Callimachus' song seems to occupy the greater part of the poem, extending from *l.*21 to *l.*75. A concluding section ('de die festo in domo familiaris et de suo ipsius carmine?', Pfeiffer on 76 ff.) then rounds off the poem.

The portion of *Iambus* XII that we are concerned with is the mythological episode in *ll.*21-75. This is introduced as a song, but it does in fact operate as an exemplum or παράδειγμα since many links can be traced between the situation portrayed in it and that of the poem as a whole. The most obvious of these is that Hera (*cf.*21 f.) held a seventh-day celebration for her

---

39. At a seventh-day celebration, held on the seventh day after a child's birth, the *Amphidromia*, the carrying of the child round the hearth, took place and the child received its name. Guests were invited to attend and brought gifts. (See Dawson, *ibid.*, pp.117 f.; W.H. Roscher, 'Die Enneadischen und Hebdomadischen Fristen und Wochen der Ältesten Griechen', *Abh. Sächs. Ges. Wiss.* XXI, no.4, 1903, pp.41-3; *PW s.v.* 'Amphidromia'.)

daughter Hebe ('Youth', a most appropriate name in the circumstances) just as Leon is holding a celebration, on the same occasion, for *his* daughter. There is clearly a compliment for the poet's friend in this implicit comparison of his daughter to the divine daughter of Hera and Zeus, and hence of Leon himself to the greatest of the gods. The other, more important, parallel between exemplum and context is that between the persons of Apollo and the poet himself. Apollo's vindication of his gift of song to Hebe referred to by the *Diegesis*, is made within the context of Callimachus' own song for Leon's daughter, and thus functions implicitly as a vindication of the *poet's* gift. This important implicit purpose of the exemplum is, as will now be shown, brought into prominence by the selection of detail within, and structure of, the mythological episode.

In *ll*.27-44, after the background to the friendly rivalry of the gods has been outlined, their respective gifts are described. Two points must be noted here. We should note the emphasis laid upon the quality of craftmanship and value of these gifts, by such phrases as πολλὰ τεχνήεντα ποικ[ίλ]α γλ[υφῇ / παίχν[ια] Τριτωνὶς ἤνεικεν κόρ[(27 f.); παίχνια χρυσοῖο τιμηέσ[τ]ερ[α (33); and Ἡφαίστεια καλά (mentioned by Apollo, 57). The reason for this emphasis emerges, as we shall see, from Apollo's song in 54 ff. The other point to notice is that the presents of the greatest craftsmen among the gods are brought into prominence by being mentioned first and last - those of Athena (Τριτωνίς, 28) first,[40]

---

40. Dawson assumes that gifts of *Zeus* were mentioned first. He adopts the reading Ζεὺς πατὴρ οὐ φαῦλον ὤ[πασεν] τέ[λος or κράτος (Barber) for *l*.26, and translates, 'Father Zeus endowed her with an honour rare'. But this must be wrong. First, as Zeus was the *father* of Hebe, and not a guest, he would not have brought a gift. Second, it seems highly unlikely that Callimachus with his well-known literary tact (on this see E. Howald, *Der Dichter Kallimachos von Kyrene*, Erlenbach-Zurich, 1943, ch. V), would have allowed the gift of Apollo to outweigh any putative gift of the King of the Gods, Zeus.

those of Hephaistos last.[41] We know that the former's gifts were toys of some kind, skilfully worked with the chisel (27 f.) while the latter's must have been gifts of gold (see Apollo's remarks in *ll*.57-64).

The significance of this selection of detail and structuring of the story in the lines leading up to Apollo's song, is now made plain by the poet through his apostrophe to the god, and through the words he puts into the god's mouth. The content of 47-53 which contain Callimachus' address to Apollo cannot now be exactly determined; but it may be conjectured from 47-9 that Callimachus, employing apostrophe, praised the god for not giving Hebe a material gift, despite all his wealth laid up in Delphi. Then Apollo begins his song:

> ... ἐγὼ δ' ἄλλην τιν' ο[.].ησ[ω ...]ιν. (Pfeiffer suggests ὁ[ικχ]ήσ[ω δόσ]ιν or ὁ[πλ]ήσ[ω)
> χρεὼ σοφῆς ὥ Φοῖβε πε[ιρ]ᾶσθαι τέχνης (55 f.)

To the manual τέχνη of Hephaistos and Athena, the master craftsmen among the gods, which the structure of the preceding lines has brought into prominence, Apollo opposes his own literary σοφὴ τέχνη, exemplified by his song. In the lines that follow he sings the song which is simultaneously both his gift to Hebe and a justification of itself - the latter, because in it Apollo draws attention to the superiority of his gift of song over all the gifts brought by the other gods. He deals with their presents in reverse order, disposing first of the Ἡφαίστεια καλά (57), the gifts of gold. Apollo has a number of objections to presents of this sort: first, that gold is brought out of the ground by 'Indian dogs' (58 f.; Callimachus cleverly adapts details of the Herodotean story to imply that gold is obtained by what were, to the Greeks, the most shameful of animals, namely dogs) ; second, that it can be given to anyone - πολλάκις καὶ φαῦλον οἰκήσει δόμον (60); third, that

---

41. *Cf.* Pfeiffer *ad* 41 *sqq.*: 'ultimus venit Volcanus' (ἐργάτης, 43). We know that actual gifts of Hephaistos were described hereabouts, since they are subsequently mentioned (at *l*.57) by Apollo in his song.

gold will lead to men's impiously rejecting the gods (this seems to be the import of *ll*.62-4). Apollo then deals with the gifts of Athena and the other gods together (65-7; the presents of the ἑτέρων must also, like those of Athena, have been manufactured goods of some kind, but only Athena's are mentioned since they would be the finest example of such goods.) To these he objects that, however skilfully crafted, they will be spoiled by the march of time. (This objection would not of course apply to Hephaistos' gifts which were of a lasting substance, hence Apollo's separate arguments against gold.) Now Apollo is at last in a position to assert the intrinsic superiority of his own gift over those of the rest of the gods. Accordingly, he begins -

> ἡ δ' ἐμὴ τῇ παιδὶ καλλίστη δόσις,
> ἔστ' ἐμὸν γένειον ἀγνεύῃ τριχός
> καὶ ἐρίφοις χαίρωσιν ἅρπαγ[ες λ]ύκ[ο]ι ... (68-70)

- and must have gone on in the lines that followed to say 'so long will my gift of song last', i.e. that his present, the song for Hebe, would endure forever.

Thus, by careful attention to structure and by skilful selection of detail, Callimachus lets the mythological exemplum, which occupies most of *Iambus* XII, implicitly make the point of the poem for him. By means of the story of Hebe's seventh-day celebration he honours Leon and his daughter (thus partially fulfilling the purpose of the poem), while through Apollo's song within a song, the poet establishes firmly though tactfully, the intrinsic superiority to all other gifts, of his own gift of poetry.[42] Again, therefore, as in *Hymn* V, the exemplum is made an integral part of the poem, essential to its purpose and meaning; and this is achieved indirectly, in an implicit manner - by the means outlined above - rather than by direct, explicit statement.

---

42. The subtle indirect way in which this latter point is made, should be compared with the manner in which Callimachus justifies his style of poetry in the *Aetia* prologue and at the end of *Hymn* II where also he makes Apollo his spokesman.

A further remarkable feature of *Iambus* XII is the manner in which it interweaves myth and the personal situation of the poet. Callimachus creates a kind of reciprocal relationship between, respectively, the mythic figures of Apollo, Zeus, Hebe, the divine guests on the one hand, and the real persons of himself, Leon, Leon's daughter, the mortal guests on the other. He makes the reader view and interpret the situations of both sets of characters each in the light of the other. The immediacy with which myth and the poet's personal situation are juxtaposed in Callimachus *Iambus* XII is, so far as we can see, unique in extant Greek poetry,[43] and yet it is commonplace in Roman love-elegy from Catullus LXVIII on, particularly in the elegies of Propertius. It may well be, though this cannot, of course, be directly proven, that Callimachus' poem directly influenced the Roman elegists' practice of subtly interweaving myth with their personal experience.[44]

APOLLONIUS RHODIUS Quite a number of mythological exempla are employed by Apollonius Rhodius in his *Argonautica*: in I, 481-4 Idmon seeks to check the hybris of Idas by citing the fate of the sons of Aloios; at III, 61 ff. Hera uses a kind of mythological hyperbole, saying she would protect Jason even if he went down to Hades to free Ixion; at III, 190 ff. Jason, hoping to win over Aeetes, recalls how the latter once friendly received Phrixus; and in IV, 57 f. the Moon cites her own love of Endymion as an example of passion. All these instances comprise pretty straightforward and conventional uses of exempla. But in what follows three novel uses of the mythological exemplum by Apollonius will be analysed, first at II, 1052-7; then in IV, 1089-95; and last, but most important, at III, 997-1004.

---

43. *Cf.* Pfeiffer (*op.cit.* n.38) p.35: 'Nur scheint bei Kallimachos das Neben-, ja das Ineinander des mythischen und des gegenwärtigen Geschehens unmittelbar zum Ausdruck gebracht zu sein ...'

44. *Cf.* Dawson, p.119.

In *Argonautica* Book II, at lines 1030 ff., we find the Argonauts approaching the Isle of Ares. As they draw near, one of their number, Klytios, shoots down with bow and arrow one of the warlike birds that inhabit that island. His action immediately prompts another Argonaut, Amphidamas, to address his fellows, seeking to dissuade them from one course of action and to exhort them to another. What is interesting about his speech is that we find Apollonius introducing into it an exemplum involving a skilful variant of the Homeric type of ring-composition:[45] instead of reinforcing the usual single purpose, the 'ring' and exemplum here reinforce a *double* purpose - of negative dissuasion on the one hand, and positive exhortation on the other.

Elements of ring-composition are clearly to be discerned from lines 1049 f. and 1058, just before and just after the exemplum. Amphidamas begins by saying that he does not think bows and arrows will help in this case. Instead, he urges his comrades ἀλλά τιν' ἄλλην/μῆτιν πορσύνωμεν ἐπίρροθον ... (1049 f.). This appeal then gives way to the exemplum itself. And the exemplum is followed immediately by the line τῶ καὶ νῦν τοίην τιν' ἐπιφραζώμεθα μῆτιν (1058). The deliberate echoing of τιν(α) μῆτιν in the lines preceding the mythological illustration by τιν(α) μῆτιν in the line just after it,[46] shows that it is certainly ring-composition of the Homeric type that Apollonius has in mind here. And yet what the Alexandrian poet in fact produces is a subtle variation of the old scheme. The form of words used by the speaker following the exemplum is not quite the same - for a reason that will become clear from our

---

45. On Amphidamas' speech in general, see the useful comments of H. Fränkel, *Noten zu den Argonautika des Apollonios*, Munich 1968, *ad loc.*; on ring-composition and exempla in Homer, see above p.26 with nn.27 and 28.

46. We may cp. also πάντεσσι δ' <u>ἐπίρροθος</u> ἦνδανε <u>μῆτις</u> in 1068 immediately following Amphidamas' speech; Vian *ad* 1058 points out that a form of the word μῆτις had also occurred earlier in the Instructions of Phineus at *l.*383 which referred forward to the present passage.

examination of the exemplum itself - as that used by him before it.

The exemplum proper, in 1052-7, is so shaped by the poet as both to reflect the twofold purpose of Amphidamas' speech and actually to make the transition from his one purpose to the other. The story of Herakles related here not only proves that bows and arrows are useless in the Argonauts' present situation, but also prepares the way for the alternative μῆτις that Amphidamas is soon to propose. The first aim of the exemplum is achieved in its opening three lines:

> οὐδὲ γὰρ Ἡρακλέης, ὁπότ' ἦλυθεν Ἀρκαδίηνδε,
> πλωάδας ὄρνιθας Στυμφαλίδος ἔσθενε λίμνης
> ὤσασθαι τόξοισι (τὸ μέν τ' ἐγὼ αὐτὸς ὄπωπα). (1052-4)

The speaker tells here how *even Herakles* (the supreme bowman) could not overcome with bow and arrows birds of exactly the same kind as the Argonauts have now encountered; and in case his companions should be incredulous, he adds, 'I witnessed the thing myself'.[47] We may presume that the forceful way in which Amphidamas puts his point has the required effect, since the matter of bows and arrows is not raised again. The second aim of the exemplum is worked out in its last half, also comprising three lines:

> ἀλλ' ὄγε χαλκείην πλαταγὴν ἑνὶ χερσὶ τινάσσων
> δούπει ἐπὶ σκοπιῆς περιμήκεος, αἱ δ' ἐφέβοντο
> τηλοῦ ἀτυζηλῷ ὑπὸ δείματι κεκληγυῖαι. (1055-7)

Amphidamas here reveals what method Herakles *did* use to get rid of the Stymphalian birds - the hero made a tremendous noise with a bronze rattle and the birds fled. But it is a plan of precisely this sort (we subsequently discover) that Amphidamas has in mind to propose to the Argonauts. This then is why τιν' ἄλλην μῆτιν in the lines preceding the exemplum, becomes <u>τοίην</u> τιν(α) μῆτιν in the line immediately after it. It is because the successful strategem devised by Herakles actually

---

47. H. Fränkel, *Noten*, *ad* 1054, comments: 'Zum Augenzeugen der Austreibung der stymphalischen Vögel hat Ap. passend einen Arkadier gemacht, einen Sohn des eponymen Heros von Alea [i.e. Aleos; see *Arg.*I,163]. Alea lag (in der Luftlinie) nur etwa 13 km. südlich von Stymphalos ...'

suggests to Amphidamas the plan he will propose (and which the Argonauts readily adopt - see 1068 ff.), namely, that they should raise a great shout and bang on their shields in order to frighten away the birds of Ares.

What is striking and novel about this exemplum is the way in which Apollonius adapts the Homeric ring-form to enable his mythological illustration to perform a number of functions at once. By having Amphidamas dwell on two different aspects of the story of Herakles and the Stymphalian birds, the poet enables the exemplum to illustrate the speaker's point that bows and arrows will be of no avail, to suggest an alternative procedure, and to serve a structural function by effecting a smooth transition from the thought of the lines preceding the exemplum to the thought of the lines following it. The manner in which elements of the Herakles story here anticipate details of Amphidamas' speech which follow, finds a parallel in the use of exempla in IV, 1090 ff., now to be analyzed.

We are here concerned with an exempla-series which occurs in a speech of Arete, queen of the Phaeacians, to her husband, Alkinoos. In this speech, seeking to persuade her husband not to hand back Medea to her (Medea's) father, Aeetes, Arete declares λίην γὰρ δύσζηλοι ἐαῖς ἐπὶ παισὶ τοκῆες (1089) - a statement which she then supports by three instances drawn from myth:

> οἷα μὲν Ἀντιόπην εὐώπιδα μήσατο Νυκτεύς,
> οἷα δὲ καὶ Δανάη πόντῳ ἔνι πήματ' ἀνέτλη
> πατρὸς ἀτασθαλίῃσι· νέον γε μὲν οὐδ' ἀποτηλοῦ
> ὑβριστὴς Ἔχετος γλήναις ἔνι χάλκεα κέντρα
> πῆξε θυγατρὸς ἑῆς, στονόεντι δὲ κάρφεται οἴτῳ,
> ὀρφναίῃ ἐνὶ χαλκὸν ἀλετρεύουσα καλιῇ. (1090-5)

Before proceeding to discuss the important implicit function of this exempla-series in Arete's speech, we should note briefly two features - the second of which serves to emphasize the explicit function of the series - of its form.

The first point that should be noticed is the use of the formulae οἷα μέν and οἷα δέ, leading into the

opening pair of exempla, which perhaps look back to the repeated formulae introducing the members of Homeric exempla-series, and to Hesiodic and more recent Hellenistic catalogue-poetry.[48] Secondly, it should be observed that the exempla are so arranged as to produce an effect of κλῖμαξ. In the first exemplum nothing more than the δυσζηλία of a father towards his daughter (which is what the gnome in *l*.1089 referred to) is illustrated; all that is said here is that Nykteus 'plotted' against his daughter Antiope (in fact he died before he could deal with her and it was left to his brother Lykos to do so). In the second exemplum, which is slightly longer than the first, we seem no longer to be dealing with a mere excess of jealousy on the part of a father, but with cruel folly; we are told, Δανάη πόντῳ ἔνι πήματ' ἀνέτλη / πατρὸς ἀτασθαλίῃσι. In the final exemplum, almost as long as the first two put together, we are presented with an instance of downright savagery;[49] the grisly details of the daughter's punishment - her blinding and being made to grind barley-corns of bronze - are given, and the father, Echetos, is made the direct agent of the punishment, blinding his daughter with his own hands (note the emphatic πῆξε opening *l*.1094). If we now look back to the two lines before the introductory gnome in 1089, we will see that Arete ended her appeal to her husband with the words: μήτ' ἄσχετα σεῖο ἕκητι / παῖδα πατὴρ θυμῷ κεκοτηότι δηλήσαιτο. By moving from an exemplum of δυσζηλία to one of fiendish cruelty within the

---

48. For catalogue-formulae in Homer and Hesiod, see R. Öhler (*diss.cit.* p.14) pp.20 f. and 36-8; and in Hellenistic elegy, above pp.20 and 21.

49. *Cf.* the comment of F. Stoessl, *Apollonios Rhodios, Interpretationen zur Erzählungskunst und Quellenverwertung*, Bern-Leipzig 1941, p.143: '... mit natürlichen Schlauheit stellt [Arete] das schrecklichste von den [Beispielen] an den Schluss und malt es breiter aus als die übrigen.' Details of the obscure story of Echetos and his daughter are given by Mooney, *comm. ad loc.*, who refers us to Eustathius p.1839. Echetos punished his daughter Metope (or Amphissa) for having slept with her lover, Aichmodikos.

exempla-series, the queen not only illustrates the statement in 1089 but also shows she has good grounds for her appeal in the preceding two lines. So much for the explicit function of the mythological illustrations, which is reinforced by the form in which they are cast.

To perceive the important *implicit* function of the exempla-series in Arete's speech, we need to look at that speech as a whole (1073-95), and at Alkinoos' answer to it (1098-1109). Each point brought forward by the various sections of the queen's address, is picked up and answered in a corresponding section of her husband's reply; and the parallelism between the two speeches is underlined by verbal echoes.[50] The request in the opening three lines of Arete's speech (1073-5) is turned down by the king in the opening three lines of his reply (1098-1100) and Μινύῃσι φέρων χάριν in *l*.1074 is echoed by ἠρώεσσι φέρων χάριν in *l*.1099. The following two lines of the queen's address (1076 f.) are picked up by the next three lines of Alkinoos' speech (1101-3), again with verbal echoes between the two sections; Αἰήτης ... Αἰήτην is echoed by Αἰήτην ... Αἰήταο. In the remainder of her speech (1078-95) Arete pleads on Medea's behalf various reasons why the princess should not be returned to her father - she was not *compos mentis* when she helped Jason, Jason should not be forced to break the oaths he has sworn to her, and finally, her father may do her some mischief (this last point being reinforced by the exempla-series). If now we examine the last part of Alkinoos' answer (*ll*.1104-9) we seem to find - strangely, in view of his careful consideration of each of the points made in the first part of Arete's speech - that he has disregarded his wife's detailed arguments in 1078-95 and has reached his decision in Medea's case on independent grounds. But if we look more closely at the mythological illustrations which round off the queen's speech, and

---

50. The remarkable degree of correspondence between these speeches is noted by A. Hurst, *Apollonios de Rhodes, Manière et Cohérence* ..., Rome 1967, p.123. (Unfortunately, however, Hurst also finds correspondences which are not there.)

then re-examine Alkinoos' judgment, we will see that it is precisely the *implications* of the exempla-series that have determined the decision made by the king.

In each of the exempla the reason *why* Antiope, Danae and Metope (or Amphissa), daughter of Echetos, were persecuted by their respective fathers is not stated but would have been well-known (at least in the case of the first two heroines) to the author's readers. In every case the heroine concerned was persecuted when her father learned that his unmarried daughter was no longer a virgin.[51] Arete does not mention this detail since it would weaken the rhetorical force of her case. If she were to admit that Nykteus, Akrisios and Echetos had some reason for their anger, it would detract from the immediate point she is trying to make, which is that fathers are often (gratuitously) cruel to their daughters. However, if we now examine Alkinoos' judgment in 1106-9, we will see that he has been persuaded by those very aspects of the exempla his wife left implicit. Having noted the implication of the exempla-series, that the fathers concerned acted cruelly because their respective unmarried daughters had been deflowered, the king decrees that *only if Medea is still a virgin* should she be returned to her father (since then, by implication, she will not be punished); if, however, she has shared Jason's bed, she should not be given back (thus avoiding the fate of Antiope, Danae and Metope) but should be allowed to remain with her husband. Alkinoos adds moreover that he will not hand over to the enemy any child of Medea's, if she has conceived, thus alerting us to further, unstated, implications of the exempla. Danae's child, Perseus, shared his mother's punishment, he too πόντῳ ἔνι πήματ' ἀνέτλη (1091), while Antiope's children, Amphion and Zethos, were abandoned by their mother as a result of her father's persecution (through the agency of Lykos). Alkinoos does not wish any child of Medea's to suffer a similar fate.

---

51. Danae and Antiope are linked by οἷα μέν ... οἷα δέ, since in both their cases the seducer was Zeus.

Exempla are used extremely subtly here. The series, with its carefully arranged κλῖμαξ effect, serves its explicit function well, providing a powerful conclusion to Arete's address. At the same time Apollonius uses the exempla to achieve great economy of expression in the speeches of the king and queen; by having Arete choose just these mythological illustrations the poet allows her to make her point that fathers are cruel to their daughters *and* implies the reason for that cruelty. Without any waste of words the exempla-series thus determines the form Alkinoos' decision will take. In the case of Medea the implications of the exempla are made explicit by the king, and are incorporated into the judgment he delivers. The implicit purpose of the exempla-series is thus seen to be equally as important as its explicit purpose.

The most complex of all Apollonius' exempla still remains to be discussed. This is the mythological illustration in Book III at 997-1004 which rounds off Jason's opening speech to Medea (975-1007) during the first interview between them. The main purpose of his speech is to persuade the princess to help him, by her art, perform the tasks Aeetes has laid upon him; and the explicit function of the exemplum in 997 ff. is, as we shall see, to reinforce this persuasive purpose.

After some preliminary remarks intended to put Medea at her ease, Jason makes his plea for help in 985-9, ending with the words: οὐ γὰρ ἄνευθεν / ὑμείων στονόεντος ὑπέρτερος ἔσσομ' ἀέθλου. (988 f.) The hero then goes on, in 990-6, to describe at some length the reward Medea can expect for her assistance: he will glorify her name and so will the other Argonauts, when they have returned to Greece (Jason thus hopefully anticipates the very assistance he is pleading for), together with their wives and mothers. The exemplum he now brings in at 997 ff., recounting the story of Theseus and Ariadne, picks up the two points raised by his speech so far, in order of their introduction. The first two lines of the exemplum -

δή ποτε καὶ Θησῆα κακῶν ὑπελύσατ' ἀέθλων
παρθενικὴ Μινωὶς ἐυφρονέουσ' Ἀριάδνη (997 f.)

- parallel Jason's plea for assistance in 985-9; and the glorious rewards won by Ariadne, described in the lines that follow -

. . . . . τὴν δὲ καὶ αὐτοί
ἀθάνατοι φίλαντο, μέσῳ δέ οἱ αἰθέρι τέκμωρ
ἀστερόεις στέφανος, τόν τε κλείουσ' Ἀριάδνης,
πάννυχος οὐρανίοις ἐνελίσσεται εἰδώλοισιν (1001-4)

- give substance to Jason's promise of future rewards to Medea in 990-6. There are also elements of ring-composition here.[52] The 'ring' begun at 990, before the exemplum, is completed in 1005, immediately following it, and is emphasized by verbal echoes: ὥς καὶ σοὶ θεόθεν χάρις ἔσσεται, εἴ κε σαώσεις κτλ. (1005) picks up the speaker's earlier words σοὶ δ' ἂν ἐγὼ τείσαιμι χάριν μετόπισθεν ἀρωγῆς (990).

We should notice the subtle way in which Jason modifies the promise of rewards in the lines following the mythological illustration. In 990-6 he described how he, the Argonauts, and their wives and mothers would give χάρις to and glorify Medea for her aid. In 1005, however, Jason says thanks will come to Medea *from the gods* - ὥς καὶ σοὶ θεόθεν χάρις ἔσσεται. The transition to this notion of divine, rather than merely human, reward is effected by the latter part of the exemplum (as ὥς καί shows). At 1001 f., quoted above, the poet has Jason insinuate that the gods loved and rewarded Ariadne *because* she helped Theseus. By including this suggestion within the exemplum the poet is able to have Jason conclude his speech on a most persuasive note, with the promise that the gods themselves, not just his friends and relations, will thank Medea if she assists him.

Before we proceed to examine the implicit allusive function of the Ariadne-exemplum, we must note some ways in which Apollonius - like Callimachus in his Aktaion-

---

52. For 'rings' enclosing exempla, see above, pp.26 and 38 f.

exemplum in *Hymn.* V[53] - strengthens the parallels between the mythological illustration and its context. The parallel between Jason and Theseus is made clear by the first line of the exemplum (997); the κακῶν ἀέθλων from which Ariadne saved the Athenian prince remind us of the στονόεντος ἀέθλου (989) from which Jason has asked Medea to rescue him. It is more important, however, that the parallels between Medea and Ariadne should be made plain, since the explicit point of the exemplum is to persuade the Colchian princess to imitate her Cretan counterpart. Accordingly, Jason describes Ariadne as παρθενική (*l*.998) echoing the first line of his speech, where he addressed Medea as παρθενική (*l*.975); again, εὐφρονέουσ(α) of Ariadne (998) reminds us of Jason's assertion (at 980) that he and Medea are εὐμενέοντες towards each other. In the next line of the exemplum Jason amplifies his description of Ariadne: ἦν δά τε Πασιφάη κούρη τέκεν Ἡελίοιο (999). At first sight this line looks like a mere genealogical embellishment, but on closer examination it becomes plain that its purpose is to strengthen further the parallels between Ariadne and Medea. Jason mentions that Ariadne's mother is Pasiphae, child of the Sun, because Aeetes, Medea's father, is also a child of the Sun. Thus Pasiphae and Aeetes are brother and sister, and Ariadne and Medea are cousins. That the poet's intention here is indeed to have Jason show how closely linked Ariadne and Medea are, emerges further on at *ll*.1074-6, where the Colchian princess, her interest aroused by this detail of the exemplum, says:

> . . . . . εἰπὲ δὲ κούρην
> ἥντινα τήνδ' ὀνόμηνας ἀριγνώτην γεγαυῖαν
> Πασιφάης, ἣ πατρὸς ὁμόγνιός ἐστιν ἐμεῖο.

This interest is expressed only at the end of her speech, but the force of the exemplum has already been felt and its purpose achieved, since Medea has by now agreed to help Jason and has given him detailed instructions for his preservation.

---

53. See above, pp.25 ff.

The main reason why Apollonius builds all these close parallels into the exemplum, has already been mentioned above; it is so that the exemplum may show Ariadne to be exactly similar to Medea and thus persuade the latter to help Jason as Ariadne once helped Theseus. However, the very strength of the parallels between mythological illustration and context creates a subsidiary effect akin to that created by Callimachus' Aktaion-exemplum. In *Hymn* V the extremely close similarity between the circumstances of Aktaion and Teiresias served to contrast sharply their ultimate fates; so here in *Argonautica* Book III, the detailed parallels between the respective situations of Ariadne and Medea, as outlined in the exemplum and its surrounding context, serve to draw the reader's attention to those aspects of Ariadne's story (as told by Jason) that the poet has subtly altered, glossed over, or simply omitted.[54] In the first place the sentence -

> ἀλλ' ἡ μὲν καὶ νηός, ἐπεὶ χόλον εὔνασε Μίνως,
> σὺν τῷ ἑφεζομένη πάτρην λίπε ..... (1000 f.)

- clearly implies that Minos did not oppose his daughter's departure with Theseus.[55] Whether Apollonius is here alluding to an unknown variant of the myth or whether he is simply inventing, does not alter the effect of this passage. In either case the reader is well aware that this version contradicts the best-known accounts of Ariadne's departure from Crete. Second, Jason simply

---

54. The attention of the Scholiast on 997-1004 was certainly drawn. He comments on Jason ... παράδειγμα φέρων τὴν Ἀριάδνην, ὅτι συναπῆρε τῷ Θησεῖ εἰς Ἀθήνας ⟨καὶ⟩ διὰ τὴν Θησέως σωτηρίαν στέφανος κατεστερίσθη. ὃν οὐδέτερον ἀληθές ... ὅτι δὲ οὔτε Μίνως συνεχώρησεν τὸν γάμον, Ὅμηρός φησι ῥητῶς [Odyssey XI, 321 ff.]. (*Scholia, ed.* C. Wendel, *ad* 997-1004.)

55. H. Herter, in his article, 'Beiträge zu Apollonios von Rhodos', *RhM* 91, 1942, 226-49, discusses this Apollonian version of the myth (pp.228-37). He believes that it stems from the handling of the myth by Atthidographers who rationalized the story and made it reflect to the Athenian Theseus' credit; and that euphemistic versions of the myth in Alexandria - where there was a deme of 'Ariadne πατροφίλα' - may have influenced Apollonius.

omits to mention another well-known part of the story, namely Theseus' subsequent desertion of Ariadne. Third, the whole episode on Naxos, Ariadne's finding herself alone and her marriage to Dionysus, is glossed over by the words: τὴν δὲ καὶ αὐτοί/ἀθάνατοι φίλαντο (1001 f.).[56] The knowing reader naturally takes these words as a somewhat vague reference to Dionysus' love for Ariadne; but the way in which the love of the gods, and the subsequent καταστερισμός of Ariadne's wreath are presented by Jason, makes it seem as if both were a reward to Ariadne for *having helped Theseus*.

From the point of view of Jason the reason for all this *suppressio veri* and *suggestio falsi* is clear. It is simply that, as a good orator, he is seeking to put the best face possible on his case, so that he may persuade Medea. Accordingly, the story of Ariadne and Theseus, so suitable a παράδειγμα in some respects, so unsuitable in others, is very carefully handled. Jason purges the exemplum of all awkward details while bringing into conspicuous prominence those aspects of the myth which he thinks will help his case.

So far all aspects of the exemplum - its ring-form, the close parallels between Ariadne and Medea, the manipulation of the content of the story it tells - have been discussed from Jason's point of view and have been related to the persuasive purpose of his speech. Now, however, the mythological illustration must be looked at differently, from the point of view of the author and his readers, so that its more general allusive purpose, a purpose unrelated to its immediate persuasive goal, may be discerned.

Examined in this new light the exemplum is seen to participate in a process of gradual foreshadowing of Medea's future by the poet, which operates in a number of places in Book III.[57] The first of these comprises

---

56. Vian rightly comments: 'l'expression est habilement ambiguë' (comm. on bk.III, *ad loc.*).

57. On this topic in general see G. Duckworth, *Foreshadowing and Suspense, in the Epics of Homer, Apollonius, and Vergil*, Princeton 1933.

*ll.*617-32, Medea's dream, which accurately foreshadows to the reader all that is to happen - Medea will help Jason perform the tasks laid on him by Aeetes; her father's wrath will cause strife between him and the Argonauts; the princess will choose to return home with Jason as his wife. Duckworth rightly points out that Medea does not perceive the true meaning of her dream: 'Her conscious mind has not yet considered the possibility of flight with Jason, and her first reaction to the dream is fear'.[58] The device employed here is thus a species of dramatic irony: the author and his readers are aware that Medea's dream reflects what is to happen, but Medea herself is not.

The same device is used again in the exemplum, 350 lines later. Here there is irony for the reader in the fact that the parallels between Ariadne and Medea, so carefully stressed by Jason, will turn out to be even closer than either Jason or Medea realizes. Firstly, the detail ἀλλ' ἡ μὲν καὶ νηός ... σὺν τῷ ἑφεζομένη πάτρην λίπε (1000 f.)[59] which Jason includes in order to demonstrate the extent of Ariadne's affection towards Theseus, is seen by the reader as a clear foreshadowing of Medea's destiny. Both the poet and the reader know that Medea, like Ariadne before her, will flee her fatherland by ship with her lover. Again, the detail ἐπεὶ χόλον εὖνασε Μίνως (1000), also included by the speaker for persuasive effect, carries ironic overtones. Ariadne's father's wrath against Theseus, after the Cretan princess had helped him, may have abated (at least in Jason's version of the myth), but the reader knows Aeetes' rage against Jason will only increase

---

58. *Ibid.*, p.48.

59. The comment of the scholiast on this passage - διὰ τούτων ἠθικῶς προκαλεῖται τὴν Μήδειαν εἰς τὸ ἀποπλεῦσαι σὺν αὐτῷ - is justly criticised by Duckworth: 'Medea does not understand Jason's words as an invitation to leave Colchis; cf.iii 1065 f., 1069 ff. Jason likewise appears to have as yet no idea that Medea will accompany him on his return; cf.iii, 1079 ff. He speaks of marriage for the first time in iii, 1122-1130.' (*ibid.*, p.57, n.128)

after his daughter has aided the Thessalian prince. Lastly, there is considerable irony, from the reader's point of view, in Jason's persuasive euphemistic account of the events on Naxos. As has already been mentioned the reader naturally sees in the words τὴν δὲ [*sc.* Ἀριάδνην] καὶ αὐτοὶ / ἀθάνατοι φίλαντο (1001 f.) a reference to Dionysus' marriage to Ariadne on Naxos; and he knows the marriage took place on the island because (in the most widely-known accounts of the story) Theseus abandoned Ariadne there. With this knowledge in mind the reader cannot but see yet another parallel (one unknown to Jason and his addressee) between Ariadne's case and Medea's: Medea, after leaving her fatherland, will be deserted by Jason in Greece, just as Ariadne once, after her flight from home, was abandoned by Theseus on Naxos.

To round off this discussion of III,997-1004, we shall examine some of the places in which Apollonius has his characters return to certain details of the mythological illustration and pick up its implications. Medea's interest in her cousin Ariadne, aroused by the exemplum, and her questions about the Cretan princess (in 1074 ff.) have already been discussed. If, however, we now look at Jason's reaction to those questions at the end of his second speech (1079-1101) we find that the prince reintroduces the subject of Ariadne in rather an oblique manner -

> ἀλλὰ τίη τάδε τοι μεταμώνια πάντ' ἀγορεύω,
> ἠμετέρους τε δόμους τηλεκλείτην τ' Ἀριάδνην,
> κούρην Μίνωος ..... ἣν μ' ἐρεείνεις; (1096-9)

- and then fails entirely to answer Medea's questions about her. Vian draws the reader's attention to this fact and comments: 'Jason elude les questions de Médée et évite d'avoir à conter en détail les aventures d'Ariadne.'[60] The prince here deals with the story of Ariadne exactly as he did in the exemplum. Just as there he suppressed all awkward details of the myth,

---

60. F. Vian, *comm. ad loc.* (*cf.* also P. Händel, *Beobachtungen zur Epischen Technik des Apollonios Rhodios*, Munich 1954, p.113).

emphasizing instead the glory Ariadne won for herself by helping Theseus, so here in the words τηλεκλείτην τ' Ἀριάδνην / . . . . . τόπερ ἀγλαὸν οὔνομα κείνην / παρθενικὴν καλέεσκον ἐπήρατον (1097-9) Jason refers only to Ariadne's fame and renown,[61] omitting all mention of those aspects of her story which might prejudice his case.

Again, in the lines that follow, Apollonius has Jason apply to himself a detail of that rare version of the myth he recounted in the exemplum. In the earlier passage ἐπεὶ χόλον εὖνασε Μίνως (1000) implied that Minos had come to an agreement with Theseus; this detail of the story is now explicitly referred by Jason to his own situation, through his wish:

> αἴθε γάρ, ὡς Θησῆι τότε ξυναρέσσατο Μίνως
> ἀμφ' αὐτῆς, ὣς ἄμμι πατὴρ τεὸς ἄρθμιος εἴη. (1100 f.)

Once more the reader is aware of the disparity between Jason's account of Theseus' relations with Minos, and the most common version of the story. This awareness is heightened by the opening lines of Medea's next speech (1105-17) in which she exposes the vanity of Jason's wish:

> Αἰήτης δ' οὐ τοῖος ἐν ἀνδράσιν οἷον ἔειπας
> Μίνω Πασιφάης πόσιν ἔμμεναι ..... (1106 f.)

To Medea who knows only what Jason has told her of the Cretan king (cp. οἷον ἔειπας) Aeetes and Minos are wholly different sorts of men; to the reader who has the most widely-known account of the Theseus-Minos story before his mind, the two kings are remarkably similar. Further ironic implications may be seen in the words Medea adds to the statement just quoted - οὐδ' Ἀριάδνῃ ἰσοῦμαι (1107 f.). Not knowing what the future holds in store for her she says she is unlike Ariadne, but the reader to whom her future is known, is aware that

---

61. The implication is of course that Medea likewise will be famous and renowned for helping Jason (*cf.* Fränkel, *Noten*, *ad loc.*) - the same point as was stressed before, after, and in, the exemplum. Jason seems particularly anxious to impress this point on Medea, as he returns to it yet again in *ll.*1123-7.

she is much more like Ariadne than she realizes. He knows that she too, like the Cretan princess before her, will leave her home for love to go to Greece with a lover who has outwitted her father, and will later be abandoned by him.

In the lines immediately following the conclusion of the interview between Jason and the princess, the poet declares, of Medea:

> σχετλίη· οὐ μὲν δηρὸν ἀπαρνήσεσθαι ἔμελλεν
> Ἑλλάδα ναιετάειν· . . . . . .
> . . . . . .
> Αἰαίη Μήδεια λιποῦσ' ἄπο πατρίδα γαῖαν. (1133-6)

Apollonius thus 'reveals' to the reader the extent to which Medea's situation parallels that of Ariadne; he resolves at a stroke all the ironies he has woven into the account of Medea's dream, the Ariadne-exemplum used by Jason, and the subsequent references to the story of Theseus, Minos and Ariadne in the interview following the mythological illustration. One irony, however, still remains unresolved. We saw above how the poet twice allowed Jason to gloss over Ariadne's desertion by Theseus on Naxos (in *ll.*1001-4 and 1096 ff.) and how the reader was made aware that this suppressed detail constituted yet another parallel between the situations of Ariadne and Medea. We should expect, therefore, that when the poet makes explicit the other similarities between the fates of the princesses (in *ll.*1132-6) this parallel too would be revealed. Revelation is not, however, omitted; it is simply delayed until an even more appropriate point in the course of the action presents itself.

In Book IV at 338 ff. the poet tells us how, in order to avoid a battle with the Colchians, the Argonauts planned to leave Medea alone on one of the islands of the Ister to await judgment whether she should go with them to Greece or be returned home. Medea, fully aware what the result of such a judgment would be, accuses Jason of treachery in an impassioned speech (355-90), and has her fears assuaged by him (395-409).

But the attentive reader, alerted by the Ariadne-Medea parallels in the previous book, realizes that the princess' fears of Jason's treachery will be justified in the end (though not within the epic itself) when she is abandoned by him in Greece. And now Apollonius proceeds to mention, of the robe of Dionysus which is to be offered as a gift to Medea's brother, Apsyrtos, that it still smelt of nectar -

> ἐξ οὗ ἄναξ αὐτὸς Νυσήιος ἐγκατέλεκτο
> ἀκροχάλιξ οἴνῳ καὶ νέκταρι, καλὰ μεμαρπὼς
> στήθεα παρθενικῆς Μινωίδος, ἣν ποτε Θησεὺς
> Κνωσσόθεν ἑσπομένην Δίῃ ἔνι κάλλιπε νήσῳ. (IV,431-4)

Here at last we are given a full and unambiguous account of the events on Naxos, of Theseus' desertion of Ariadne and her union with Dionysus. The timing of this disclosure by the author, is perfect. Just when Medea's fears of treachery on Jason's part have been assuaged, the poet resolves for his readers the one irony he failed to resolve in III, 1132 ff. Now, through the medium of the myth in IV, 431 ff. giving the true version of the events on Naxos, he hints allusively at the parallel his readers were already aware of in Book III - between Ariadne once abandoned by Theseus on Naxos, and Medea to be deserted by Jason in Greece.[62]

THEOCRITUS Theocritus, like Apollonius in his *Argonautica*, uses mythological exempla on a number of occasions in his *Idylls* in a fairly conventional manner. For example: in XVI, 48-57 various heroes who would be forgotten if Homer had not sung are enumerated in an exempla-series, while in 74 f. Ajax and Achilles are cited as types of great heroes; in XV, 137-42, a list of mythological examples illustrates the fact that Adonis

---

62. I cannot but feel that my account of lines 431-4 is more convincing than Fränkel's (*Noten, ad* IV, 423-34). I would certainly agree with him that these lines cannot be dismissed as mere ἔκφρασις; but his interpretation of Dionysus' coming to Dia as 'eine Art von Analogiezauber' intended to draw Apsyrtos to an island meeting-place, seems far-fetched. The main point of the episode as described here is surely not Dionysus' coming to the island, but rather his union with Ariadne after she had been abandoned by Theseus.

alone of the heroes visits both Acheron and Earth.[63] But more interesting than these instances from our point of view, is the exempla-series which constitutes the goatherd's song in *Idyll* III,40-51.

In order to assess correctly the function of the song in III, 40 ff.[64] it is necessary first to look briefly at the lines leading up to it. We should notice, to begin with, the strongly *dramatic* character of this opening section of the poem. The poet nowhere speaks *in propria persona*, the voice only of the central character, the rustic, is heard. Moreover the reader is left to imagine a dramatic interval between the herdsman's instructions to Tityrus (3-5) and his arrival outside his mistress' cave (at *l*.6). And again, a pause is to be imagined after *l*.23, when no response to the goatherd's offer of gifts is forthcoming from his beloved Amaryllis. Secondly, it should be observed that the prevailing mood of the herdsman in *ll*.6-36 is despondency. He twice threatens to commit suicide (in 9 and 25 ff. - though clearly the poet intends us to be amused rather than alarmed at these threats), and he complains of the cruelty of Love (15-17).

Line 37, just before the goatherd's song begins, marks the first point at which his fortunes seem to be taking a turn for the better. Now his words -

> ἄλλεται ὀφθαλμός μευ ὁ δεξιός· ἆρά γ' ἰδησῶ
> αὐτάν; ἀσεῦμαι ποτὶ τὰν πίτυν ὧδ' ἀποκλινθείς,
> καί νέ μ' ἴσως ποτίδοι ἐπεὶ οὐκ ἀδαμαντίνα ἐστίν. (37-9)

- reveal a sudden surge of optimism; he begins to sing in the confident belief that Amaryllis is coming out to

---

63. There are also, at much greater length, the paradeigmatic mythological episodes in the *Cyclops* (XI) and *Hylas* (XIII); cp. also the song of Lycidas in VII, 52-89, involving the mythological figures of Daphnis and Comatas (on the significance of which, see C. Macleod (*art.cit.*n.24) pp.91 f.).

64. The arguments adduced by Gow (comm. on line 6) to show that the goatherd's song begins at *l*.6, seem to me wholly inconclusive. Dover (intro. to *Id.* III) assumes, in my view rightly, that the song begins at *l*.40; this is also the view of the Scholiast *ad loc.*

him. His song, which then follows immediately, comprises the twelve lines 40-51:[65]

> Ἱππομένης, ὅκα δὴ τὰν παρθένον ἤθελε γᾶμαι,
> μᾶλ' ἐν χερσὶν ἐλὼν δρόμον ἄνυεν· ἁ δ' Ἀταλάντα
> ὡς ἴδεν ὡς ἐμάνη, ὡς ἐς βαθὺν ἅλατ' ἔρωτα.
>
> τὰν ἀγέλαν χὠ μάντις ἀπ' Ὄθρυος ἄγε Μελάμπους
> ἐς Πύλον· ἁ δὲ Βίαντος ἐν ἀγκοίναισιν ἐκλίνθη
> μάτηρ ἁ χαρίεσσα περίφρονος Ἀλφεσιβοίας. 45
>
> τὰν δὲ καλὰν Κυθέρειαν ἐν ὥρεσι μῆλα νομεύων
> οὐχ οὕτως Ὠδωνὶς ἐπὶ πλέον ἄγαγε λύσσας
> ὥστ' οὐδὲ φθίμενόν νιν ἄτερ μαζοῖο τίθητι;
>
> ζαλωτὸς μὲν ἐμὶν ὁ τὸν ἄτροπον ὕπνον ἰαύων
> Ἐνδυμίων· ζαλῶ δέ, φίλα γύναι, Ἰασίωνα,
> ὃς τόσσων ἐκύρησεν ὅσ' οὐ πευσεῖσθε βέβαλοι.

The first half of this song, containing the exempla of Hippomenes and Melampus (each hero is allotted a three-line section), gives expression to the goatherd's new-found optimism. 'Hippomenes and Melampus are analogous to the goatherd himself because they earned a bride (Melampus vicariously ....) by the gifts which they were able to offer.'[66] In both exempla, we should note, stress is laid upon the successful issue brought about by the heroes' provision of gifts - in Hippomenes' case, ἁ δ' Ἀταλάντα / ὡς ἴδεν ὡς ἐμάνη, ὡς ἐς βαθὺν ἅλατ' ἔρωτα (41 f.), while as a result of Melampus' vicarious largesse,

> ..... ἁ δὲ Βίαντος ἐν ἀγκοίναισιν ἐκλίνθη
> μάτηρ ἁ χαρίεσσα περίφρονος Ἀλφεσιβοίας. (44 f.)

The implication, obviously, is that the gifts which the goatherd has offered, and to which he has three times pointedly drawn attention (*ll.*10 ff., 21 ff., 34 ff.), will win Amaryllis to be his bride. The example of Hippomenes especially holds out hope for the herdsman, since the gifts with which the hero achieved such spectacular results, namely apples, are precisely those that the goatherd has offered to his beloved Amaryllis (*ll.*10 ff.).

---

65. The song in these lines has a marked formal structure, which I indicate by spacing in the text. It falls into four divisions, each of three lines; and it is also clearly divisible into two halves, each comprising two three-line sections.

66. Dover, *comm. ad loc.*

Once the first half of the song has been sung we should, I believe, imagine another dramatic pause, like those after lines 5 and 23, during which the realization dawns on the goatherd that the optimism to which he gave expression in the opening pair of exempla was ill-founded - Amaryllis is not after all going to come out to him. Now, after the brief flowering of his hope, the despair of the first part of the poem again comes over him; and it is just this despair that is reflected in the three exempla of the second half of his song. He still seems to contemplate the possibility that Amaryllis, for her part, may love him, but he sees only disaster in store for himself.[67] Accordingly, he sings of three rustics who were all loved by goddesses but came to a bad end. The first exemplum of the second half of the song reflects his pessimism most precisely (just as the Hippomenes-story at the start most clearly expressed his optimism). Adonis ἐν ὤρεσι μῆλα νομεύων (this detail seems to point to a close parallel between hero and goatherd - the latter too appears to herd his flocks on the hillside, see lf.), inspired in Aphrodite such a degree of passion that *not even in death* does she put him from her breast. Thus, obliquely, through the phrase οὐδὲ φθίμενον (48), the herdsman draws attention to the fact that concerns him, that Adonis inspired great love in Aphrodite - and died. In the second exemplum disaster alone is made the subject of the mythological example: ζαλωτὸς μὲν ἐμὶν ὁ τὸν ἄτροπον ὕπνον ἰαύων / Ἐνδυμίων (49 f.); Selene's love of the hero is left to be inferred by the reader. Here it better suits the goatherd's mood of pessimism to draw attention to Endymion's perpetual sleep rather than to his union with a goddess. The final exemplum, that of Iasion, is deliberately ambiguous; behind the words ὃς τόσσων ἐκύρησεν ὅσ' οὐ πευσεῖσθε βέβαλοι (51), lies the story that Iasion won the love of Demeter but was

---

67. Dover's comparison of *Hom.Hymn* V, 149 ff. suggests another part of the goatherd's meaning in the latter half of the song: 'In his self-pitying and self-destructive mood the goatherd thinks extinction a fair price to pay for brief attainment of his desire.' (note on 40-51)

blasted by Zeus' lightning. Again therefore, as in the Adonis-exemplum, the herdsman's hope of love is tempered by thoughts of death.

In the final three lines of the poem, which follow immediately on the song, the goatherd has abandoned all hope of winning Amaryllis, and his despair is total. The thoughts of death which appeared in 9 and 25 ff. and were reintroduced by the second half of the song, are now taken up in this final section. The goatherd declares that, as Amaryllis does not care for him, he will lie where he has fallen and the wolves will eat him.

We should notice the very careful balance between these three lines following the goatherd's song and the three lines which precede it. The sentences, ἄλλεται ὀφθαλμός μευ ὁ δεξιός· ἆρά γ' ἴδησῶ / αὐτάν; (37 f.) are balanced by, ἀλγέω τὰν κεφαλάν, τὶν δ' οὐ μέλει (52); again, ἀσεῦμαι ποτὶ τὰν πίτυν ὧδ' ἀποκλινθείς (38), is balanced by, οὐκέτ' ἀείδω, / κεισεῦμαι δὲ πεσών (52 f.); and καί κέ μ' ἴσως ποτίδοι ἐπεὶ οὐκ ἀδαμαντίνα ἐστίν (39), by, καὶ τοὶ λύκοι ὧδέ μ' ἔδονται / ὡς μέλι τοι γλυκὺ τοῦτο κατὰ βρόχθοιο γένοιτο (53 f.). If my interpretation of the exempla is correct, the goatherd's song with its dramatic movement effects a smooth transition between these balancing sections expressing first hope then despair. To summarize: the herdsman, his confidence bolstered up by the omen of *l.*37, begins his song with two powerfully persuasive exempla, in both of which the happy issue for the heroes concerned reflects his present high hopes (*ll.*40-5); there is a dramatic pause after the first half of the song during which he perceives that the gifts he has offered and the song he is singing are having no effect; his hopes now dampened but not extinguished, he sings of rustics who inspired love in goddesses but came to a bad end (*ll.*46-51); then, his song over and Amaryllis still not having appeared, he abandons the last vestiges of hope and gives himself up to be eaten by the wolves.

It will be clear from the above analysis of the

song in III, 40-51 that I do not agree with the view of recent commentators and critics that the herdsman's choice of exempla is meant to be comically inappropriate to his situation. Their criticisms are directed, in particular, against the second half of the herdsman's song. Gow's opinion is that the goatherd is 'not altogether happy' in his choice of Endymion and Iasion as exempla;[68] Rosenmeyer declares: 'Clearly, the poor herdsman with his pathetic book learning has not the slightest idea what he is singing about';[69] Dover sees in the latter half of the song (at a first reading) ' ... a comically insensitive and ignorant choice of exempla'.[70] None of these critics (except Rosenmeyer) finds any difficulty in the first half of the song, but because the relevance of the exempla in the second half is not so immediately obvious, they assume the stories of Endymion and Iasion are intended to be comically inappropriate. If however we postulate, as I have done, a dramatic pause after *l*.45 during which a change of mood from optimism to gloom occurs, the difference between the two halves of the song observed by these critics is more plausibly accounted for. This is not to deny that the herdsman's song is comic. There *is* comedy here, but it lies in the goatherd's exaggeration of his hope and despair, and in the incongruity of the implied comparison of himself to heroes and Amaryllis to heroines and goddesses, rather than in an ignorant and clumsy *choice* of mythological illustrations inappropriate to his case.

All the uses of exempla by Hellenistic poets that we have examined so far in this section, have been most skilful and subtle. Now, in order to highlight the quality of these uses, and to show, in particular, the

---

68. Gow, *comm. ad v*.50.

69. T. Rosenmeyer, *The Green Cabinet, Theocritus and the European Pastoral Lyric*, Berkeley and Los Angeles 1969, p.174; similar remarks are made also by G. Lawall, *Theocritus' Coan Pastorals*, Cambridge Mass. 1967, p.40.

70. Dover, *comm. ad vv*.40-51.

skill with which Theocritus employs mythological illustrations in the poem just dealt with, we shall look briefly at an exempla-series in Ps.-Theocritus XX (the so-called *Boukoliskos*) which imitates the exempla-series in *Idyll* III.

In *ll.*31 f. of the *Boukoliskos*, shortly before the mythological illustrations are introduced, the herdsman complains of his beloved Eunica -

> καὶ πᾶσαί με φιλεῦντι· τὰ δ' ἀστικά (i.e. Εὐνίκα) μ' οὐκ ἐφίλασεν,
> ἀλλ' ὅτι βουκόλος ἐμμὶ παρέδραμε κοὔποτ' ἀκούει

- thus echoing her words at 3 f.:

> βουκόλος ὢν ἐθέλεις με κύσαι, τάλαν; οὐ μεμάθηκα
> ἀγροίκως φιλέειν ἀλλ' ἀστικὰ χείλεα θλίβειν.

These two pairs of lines just quoted convey the whole situation of the poem: Eunica, a town girl, does not love the protagonist because he is an oxherd. It is the simple purpose of the exempla-series, which is 'set up' by 31 f., to show that oxherds are worthy of love. Accordingly, the poet has the herdsman relate in lines 34-41, four exempla[71] all showing how deities loved oxherds - and thus the purpose of the series is achieved. However, whereas Theocritus assigned no explicit purpose to the exempla-series in *Idyll* III, but let its many different allusive connexions with the goatherd's case and its dramatic movement emerge naturally from the context, the poet of Ps.-Theoc.XX heavily underlines the purpose of 34-41 and does not enliven his exempla-series with any movement; all the mythological illustrations operate in the same way. The poet makes sure we do not forget the point to be illustrated by the exempla, by including in each a reminder of the particular beloved hero's status. Thus we have ἀνέρι βούτᾳ in the first exemplum (34-6), βουκόλος and βουκολέοντα in the second (37-9), βουκόλον in the third (40) and παῖδα βοηνόμον in the fourth (40 f.); and in the lines immediately following, in case we still have not grasped the point put forward

---

71. I follow Gow (*OCT*) in bracketing *l.*33; see his comm. *ad loc.*

by 3 f., 31 f. and the exempla-series as a whole, the poet has the oxherd say:

> Εὐνίκα δὲ μόνα τὸν βουκόλον οὐκ ἐφίλασεν,
> ἀ Κυβέλας κρέσσων καὶ Κύπριδος ἠδὲ Σελάνας. (42 f.)

We should in conclusion notice one interesting feature about the exempla-series that betrays its derivative quality. Theocritus, as we have just seen, included in the goatherd's song in III,40 ff. reference to some loves of goddesses for mortals that ended in disaster for the beloved concerned, by these means preparing the way for the herdsman's despairing declarations at the end of the poem. His imitator similarly hints at the death of Kypris' beloved Adonis (τὸν Ἄδωνιν ... ἐν δρυμοῖσιν ἔκλαυσεν, *ll.*35 f.) and of Rhea's beloved Gallus (καὶ τύ, Ῥέα, κλαίεις τὸν βουκόλον, *l.*40), and alludes to the sleep of Endymion; but in the context of this poem these hints and allusions to disaster are simply otiose, since nowhere does the oxherd express despair, let alone threaten to commit suicide, like the goatherd of *Idyll* III. Here we are indeed dealing with a 'comically ignorant and insensitive choice of exempla'[72] - and that on the part of the poet himself.

What Callimachus, Apollonius Rhodius and Theocritus have shown by their uses of exempla examined in this section, is how the mythological exemplum - even in its epic 'ring-form' - may be adapted to meet the needs of the highly artistic, small-scale, poem or episode, and the exigencies of the 'thin' polished style affected by Hellenistic poets. In epic, where the mythological illustration is originally at home, the primary aim of the poetry is the linear development of plot, and the means by which this is achieved are all the techniques of narrative. Clearly, in an epic poem, exempla are essentially narrative *digressions* - that is to say, the sheer scale of the poem and the force of the narrative are such that the removal of exempla from their context

---

72. See above, n.70.

would not materially affect the nature of the work. In Hellenistic poetry, on the other hand, new artistic ends are aimed at, and new methods adopted to realise those ends. Poetic themes are now deliberately made more narrow (this is true also, I believe, of Apollonius' purportedly 'epic' poetry)[73] and are handled allusively, indirectly; important, even central, aspects of a theme may be developed through an aside to the reader, an apostrophe to the subject of a poem, a song or speech put into the mouth of a secondary character, an allusion, a prophecy, etc. And as the scope of poetry is narrowed in the Hellenistic period, so every individual element in a particular poem or episode must be made to contribute to the overall effect thereof.

Now this last statement is true, as we have seen, of the exemplum. In every case (with the exception, of course, of Ps.-Theoc.XX, 34 ff.) the exempla analysed in this section performed not only an explicit function of comparison, exhortation, or whatever, but also an implicit allusive one, which linked them to the wider context of their various poems or episodes. In Callimachus' *Hymn* V, the Aktaion-exemplum contributed to the purpose of the poem as a whole by throwing into relief Athena's humanity and power; in his *Iambus* XII the mythological paradigm implicitly honoured Leon and his daughter, and enhanced the value of the poet's gift, the poem itself. The Herakles-exemplum in *Argonautica* II, 1052 ff. performed a structural function by effecting a transition in thought; in bk. IV, 1089 ff. the implications of the exempla in Arete's speech had the effect of determining the form of Alkinoos' judgment on Medea; the story of Ariadne as presented by the exemplum in III, 997 ff. formed a link in a whole chain of ironic

---

73. Apollonius' *Argonautica* (with the exception of the Jason-and-Medea story) is rightly criticised for its episodic quality and lack of narrative unity. Where Apollonius *is*, however, successful is within the limits of the individual episode - like the other Hellenistic poets he is at his best when writing in a concentrated style within a narrow compass. The Apollonian 'episode' may thus, without qualms, be discussed in the same terms as the small-scale Callimachean or Theocritean poem.

and allusive references to Medea's future experience running right through bk. III and on into IV. And the exempla comprising the song of the goatherd in Theocritus' *Idyll* III were made by the poet to partake in the dramatic movement of the poem as a whole, and - like the Herakles-exemplum in *Arg.* II, 1052 ff. - to effect a transition, here in the rustic's feelings from optimism to despair.

The means used to achieve all these subtle and allusive effects, are several. We find Callimachus, Apollonius and Theocritus variously paying close attention to the structure of the exemplum; adapting not only the exemplum to fit its context but also the *context* to fit the exemplum; creating significant verbal echoes between the two; showing great care in their *selection* of mythological exempla and/or the shaping of detail within them. By these means the exemplum is made essential to its context, and is so firmly embedded therein that it could not be removed without altering the entire nature of the particular poem or episode concerned.

The Augustan elegists, two hundred and fifty years later, seem to have learned from the greatest of the Hellenistic poets how the mythological illustration could be made into an invaluable poetic resource, even within the confines of a brief, though highly-wrought, poem. Propertius and Tibullus in particular, in order to make their references to myth an essential part of the personal elegies in which they appear, use precisely the same techniques as those employed by Callimachus, Apollonius and Theocritus, and described above. We shall find the Roman love-elegists, in the manner of their Hellenistic predecessors, displaying considerable care in their selection, and shaping, of significant mythological episodes to illumine their personal experience; mutually adapting *both* their own experience *and* the myth that illustrates it, so that the two dovetail exactly; setting up significant verbal echoes between exemplum and context; paying close attention to the structure of the exemplum. And their purpose in so doing is to achieve the same sorts of allusive and

implicit effects, and transitions in thought or feeling, as those we have seen to be achieved above. In respect of their treatment of the mythological illustration at least, the influence of the major Hellenistic poets on the Augustan love-elegists would seem to have been decisive.

(iii) Hellenistic Epigram[74]

As most Hellenistic erotic and sympotic epigrams (the only types we shall be concerned with here) are written in the personal mode, and as not a few of them make reference to mythology, we might reasonably suppose they formed an important source for the Roman elegists' use of myth in their personal poetry. But this supposition would be incorrect. The fact is that the epigrammatists were not seeking - as the elegists *were* - primarily to convey the *quality* of their experience in love, in all its immediacy. Their primary aim was rather to display *wit*; the typical epigram is built around a witty conceit, a clever juxtaposition of ideas, a neat turn of phrase. And so 'personal experience', as expressed in the epigrams of these poets, tends to assume stereotyped forms, designed to delight the intellect rather than to move the heart. In keeping with this design, myth, where it is used by the epigrammatists, is made a vehicle for wit, or material from which conceits may be constructed; it is not meant to deepen our insight into the poet's personal experience. A brief survey of the epigrammatists' uses of myth should serve to substantiate this point.

Leaving aside Eros and Kypris who would require a study on their own, the figures out of whom witty mythological conceits are most frequently created, are

---

74. On the relationship between Greek epigram and Latin love-elegy in general, see A.A. Day (*op.cit.* n.4) pp.102-37, and the literature cited there. The epigrams of the *Anthology* which date from the Hellenistic period (and just after) most of which could have been read by the elegists, are to be found in the collections of Gow and Page, *Hellenistic Epigrams*, Cambridge 1965, and *The Garland of Philip*, Cambridge 1968, whose texts I follow.

Zeus and Ganymede (often), and Bacchus. To take the last-mentioned first: we find 'Bacchus' (or another of the god's titles) three times used, by antonomasia, for 'wine' - a simple equivalence the epigrammatists cannot resist. In Antipater of Sidon *A.P.*VII, 26, there is little wit in the antonomasia; in Meleager *A.P.*IX, 331, far more. The latter poem is constructed wholly around the conceit Nymphs = Water, Bacchus = Wine. This equation granted, an incident from Bacchus' early history is used to prove that wine should be mixed with water:

> Αἱ Νύμφαι τὸν Βάκχον, ὅτ' ἐκ πυρὸς ἅλαθ' ὁ κοῦρος,
> νίψαν ὑπὲρ τέφρης ἄρτι κυλιόμενον·
> τοὔνεκα σὺν Νύμφαις Βρόμιος φίλος· ἦν δέ νιν εἴργῃς
> μίσγεσθαι, δέξῃ πῦρ ἔτι καιόμενον. (*A.P.*IX,331)

A slightly more laboured conceit, also referring to the birth of Bacchus, occurs in Argentarius *A.P.*IX, 246. Here, in the first half of the epigram the poet addresses a wine-flagon:

> ἐθραύσθης ἡδεῖα παρ' οἰνοπόταισι λάγυνε
> νηδύος ἐκ πάσης χευαμένη Βρόμιον·
> τηλόθε γὰρ λίθος εἷς σε βαρύστονος οἷα κεραυνός
> οὐ Διὸς ἐκ χειρῶν ἀλλὰ Δίωνος ἔβη. (*A.P.*IX,246,1-4)

Ostensibly these lines simply describe an incident at a symposium when a flagon was broken by the successful cast of a stone; but the antonomasia Βρόμιον for 'wine', the pun on νηδύς, which can mean the belly both of a human being and of a jar, the comparison of the flight of the stone to that of a thunderbolt, and the emphasis in οὐ Διός ... ἀλλὰ Διώνος, all prepare the way for a conceit in the final couplet. These lines -

> οὐ θρηνῶ σε, λάγυνε, τὸν εὐαστῆρα τεκοῦσαν
> Βάκχον, ἐπεὶ Σεμέλη καὶ σὺ πεπόνθατ' ἴσα. (*A.P.*IX,246,7 f.)

- hardly come as a surprise after all the hints of the opening two couplets.

Zeus appears frequently in the erotic epigrams, as in trifles of the following sort -

> Στήσομ' ἐγὼ καὶ Ζηνὸς ἐναντίον, εἴ σε, Μυΐσκε,
> ἁρπάζειν ἐθέλοι νέκταρος οἰνοχόον.
> καίτοι πολλάκις αὐτὸς ἐμοὶ τάδ' ἔλεξε· "τί ταρβεῖς;
> οὔ σε βαλῶ ζήλοις· οἶδα παθὼν ἐλεεῖν".
> χὠ μὲν δὴ τάδε φησίν· ἐγὼ δ', ἢν μυῖα παραπτῇ,
> ταρβῶ μὴ ψεύστης Ζεὺς ἐπ' ἐμοὶ γέγονεν. (Meleager, *A.P.*XII,70)

- or Asclepiades *A.P.*V,167,5 f., where the lover has been forced to wait outside his beloved's door under a 'rainy Zeus':

> ..... ἄχρι τίνος, Ζεῦ;
> Ζεῦ φίλε, σιγήσω· καὐτὸς ἐρᾶν ἔμαθες.

Very often in the paederastic epigrams (as in the piece by Meleager just quoted) Zeus appears in conjunction with Ganymede, the latter being connected in some way with the poet's beloved. The opening couplet of *A.P.* XII,69[75] is typical:

> Ζεῦ προτέρῳ τέρπου Γανυμήδεϊ, τὸν δ' ἐμόν, ὦναξ,
> Δέξανδρον δέρκευ τηλόθεν· οὐ φθονέω.

We may compare further Dioscorides *A.P.*XII,37, and Meleager *A.P.*XII,65 and 133. Much play, too, is made of Zeus' transformations into various shapes for erotic purposes. The exercise of wit in this area seems to have commended itself more to the authors of the *Garland of Philip* than to the earlier epigrammatists of Meleager's *Garland*. Of the latter, only Asclepiades and Moschus employ the theme. In the concluding couplet of Asclepiades' epigram, describing a κῶμος, the lover says -

> ἕλκει γάρ μ' ὁ κρατῶν καὶ σοῦ θεός, ᾧ ποτε πεισθείς,
> Ζεῦ, διὰ χαλκείων χρυσὸς ἔδυς θαλάμων. (*A.P.*V,64,5 f.)

- while in Moschus' poem Eros, at the plough, says to Zeus:

> ..... "πλῆσον ἀρούρας
> μή σε τὸν Εὐρώπης βοῦν ὑπ' ἄροτρα βάλω". (*A.Pl.*200,5 f.)

In the *Garland of Philip*, Antipater, Bassus and Parmenion all refer to Zeus' metamorphoses, but now in a cynical and rationalistic fashion. Their epigrams are worth quoting in full, since the references to myth display important affinities with certain passages of Ovid's *Amores*. Antipater makes allusion to Zeus' transformation into a bull -

> δραχμῆς Εὐρώπην τὴν Ἀτθίδα μήτε φοβηθείς
> μηδένα μήτ' ἄλλως ἀντιλέγουσαν ἔχε,
> καὶ στρωμνὴν παρέχουσαν ἀμεμφέα χώπότε χειμὼν
> ἄνθρακας. ἦ ῥα μάτην, Ζεῦ φίλε, βοῦς ἐγένου. (*A.P.*V,109)

---

75. Labelled ἄδηλον in the mss. but included by Gow and Page in *Hellenistic Epigrams* (Anonymous XXI), as its context is thoroughly 'Meleagrian'.

- and into a shower of gold:

χρύσεος ἦν γενεὴ καὶ χάλκεος ἀργυρέη τε
πρόσθεν, παντοίη δ' ἡ Κυθέρεια τὰ νῦν,
καὶ χρυσοῦν τίει καὶ χάλκεον ἄνδρ' ἐφίλησεν
καὶ τοὺς ἀργυρέους οὔποτ' ἀποστρέφεται.
Νέστωρ ἡ Παφίη· δοκέω δ' ὅτι καὶ Δανάῃ Ζεὺς
οὐ χρυσός, χρυσοῦς δ' ἦλθε φέρων ἑκατόν. (*A.P.*V,31)

Bassus alludes to the stories of Danae, Europa and Leda:

οὐ μέλλω ῥεύσειν χρυσός ποτε· βοῦς δὲ γένοιτο
ἄλλος χὠ μελίθρους κύκνος ἐπηόνιος·
Ζηνὶ φυλασσέσθω τάδε παίγνια· τῇ δὲ Κορίννῃ
τοὺς ὀβολοὺς δώσω τοὺς δύο κοὐ πέτομαι. (*A.P.*V,125)

Parmenion twice gives a twist to the Danae myth, in the couplet -

ἐς Δανάην ἔρρευσας, Ὀλύμπιε, χρυσός, ἵν' ἡ παῖς
ὡς δώρῳ πεισθῇ, μὴ τρέσῃ ὡς Κρονίδην. (*A.P.*V,33)

- and in:

ὁ Ζεὺς τὴν Δανάην χρυσοῦ, κἀγὼ δέ σε χρυσοῦ·
πλείονα γὰρ δοῦναι τοῦ Διὸς οὐ δύναμαι. (*A.P.*V,34)

Finally, a neat employment of the transformation motif by the author of *A.P.*IX,108[76] deserves quotation:

ὁ Ζεὺς πρὸς τὸν Ἔρωτα, "βέλη τὰ σὰ πάντ' ἀφελοῦμαι",
χὠ πτανός, "βρόντα, καὶ πάλι κύκνος ἔσῃ".

The above rapid survey has shown clearly enough, I believe, the way in which the epigrammatists of the Hellenistic period use myth - even in their 'subjective', 'personal', epigrams - primarily as a vehicle for wit. A glance at (to cite just a few examples quoted above) Meleager *A.P.*XII,70, the opening couplet of *A.P.*XII,69, Bassus *A.P.*V,125 and Parmenion *A.P.*V,34, should make plain that the epigrammatists, when they write of their own 'experience', are not seeking to convey to the reader the essential quality thereof. The personal mode is simply a convenient device - these 'subjective' epigrams, just as much as the 'objective' ones written in the third person, are composed in accordance with an overriding principle which informs both types equally,

---

76. ἀδέσποτον, but included by Gow and Page in the *Garland of Philip* (Anonymous III).

namely, *wit*. And it is this same principle that dictates the way in which myth is used. There is no essential difference in quality between the uses of myth in the 'objective' epigrams where they have no personal reference, and those in the 'subjective' epigrams where they do. In each case myth is made to be subordinate, and to contribute, to the purpose of the epigram as a whole, which is the expression of wit.

Now wit, although certainly not absent from them, is *not* the main principle of the personal elegies of Tibullus and Propertius. As was indicated at the start of this section, the purpose of these poets was rather to impress upon the reader the *quality* of their experience in love, a complex blend of joy and pain. Accordingly we do not generally find myth used by them in their personal poetry in the flippant and pointed manner of Hellenistic epigram.[77] We find Tibullus and Propertius using myth rather to lend depth and dignity to, and to bring out some important feature of, their personal experience. However, the last of the love-elegists, Ovid, presents a very different aspect. In his *Amores*, as in Hellenistic epigram, the poet's experience in love is, for the most part, stylized and made merely an arena for the free play of the intellect.[78] Ovid is concerned, not, as the earlier elegists had been, to convince the reader of the reality of his experience, but instead to *entertain* him. And so myth, where it is referred to in the *Amores* in connection with 'personal experience' is often informed by a thoroughly epigrammatic spirit of point and wit. On some occasions,

---

77. The small influence of the epigrammatists on Propertius' use of myth at least, is briefly discussed by B.W. Kölmel, *Die Funktion des Mythologischen in der Dichtung des Properz*, diss. Heidelberg 1957, p.31. Propertius does, however, occasionally treat Jupiter in the manner of epigram (*cf*.II,2,4; II,22A,25 ff.; II,30,28 ff.).

78. *Cf*. E. Reitzenstein, 'Das Neue Kunstwollen in den Amores Ovids', *RhM* 84, 1935, 62-88. He remarks on the Hellenistic spirit of Ovid's love-poetry, and comments that in it '... das παίζειν ist zum Grundprinzip erhoben worden' (p.86).

specifically when he mentions Jupiter and his amours, Ovid seems actually to be indebted to epigram for his treatment of myth.[79] But even where no direct debt can be traced, his light-hearted and rationalistic attitude to mythology, and his frequent use of it to evoke a smile from the reader, are very much in the Hellenistic epigrammatic tradition.

---

79. See below, Chapter 5, nn.11, 35, 40 and 41.

Chapter 2

THE ROMAN BACKGROUND

Our enquiry into the 'Hellenistic Background' produced no actual instance of a poet using myth in a serious manner to illumine his personal experience in love. We could reasonably conjecture that some at least of the catalogue-elegists and their forerunners *did* so use myth, but we could not actually see and analyse their manner of so doing. It is in Roman literature that, for the first time, we find examples, which survive and may be examined, of myth functioning as an essential part of personal love-poetry, used to bring out important aspects of the poet's experience. To some extent it may be misleading to talk of a 'Roman Background' here, since it is the poems themselves of the Augustan elegists that are our earliest extant documents in this sphere. But there is one important exception.[1] I mean, of course, Catullus LXVIII, itself an elegy dealing, in large part anyway, with the author's love-experience, and making extensive use of myth to cast light upon it. (Another, possible, exception is the elegies of Gallus, which we shall briefly consider after discussion of Catullus' poem.)

(i) Catullus LXVIII

Catullus LXVIII has been so often and so thoroughly analysed in recent years under every aspect, including its handling of myth, that there is no point in adding

---

1. *Sc.* 'on the evidence as we have it'. Love-poets at Rome before Catullus, so far as we can tell from the meagre remains of their writings (to be found in *Fragmenta Poetarum Latinorum*, ed. W. Morel), made no significant use of myth in their love-poetry. The erotic epigrams of Valerius Aedituus, Q. Lutatius Catulus and Porcius Licinus yield only two brief references to Venus and one to Aurora. The enigmatic poet Laevius composed *Erotopaegnia* which contained at least one allusion to myth (*cf.* fr.4) and wrote a number of other works with mythological titles (*cf.* frr.6-21); but we cannot tell how, or whether at all, myth was linked to personal experience therein.

a further analysis here.[2] I shall simply give a summary account - following in the main the important article of Macleod - of the most significant features of Catullus' use of myth in this poem, and indicate their connexion with Hellenistic poetry, and their significance for Catullus' elegiac followers.

In his long elegy LXVIII, in lines 73-130, Catullus tells the story of Laodamia's love for Protesilaus. The only *explicit* connexion between the myth and its context, is that the manner of Laodamia's arrival at Protesilaus' house, was just like that of Lesbia at the house where she used to meet with Catullus. This connexion is made plain in the couplets 73 f. and 131 f. It is, however, quite clear that the myth has many other and more important *implicit* links with Catullus' and Lesbia's situation, links which the poet leaves the reader to discover for himself.

On a closer examination of the myth, the following main correspondences appear. Firstly, Laodamia, although overtly compared with Lesbia, is, in the depth and intensity of her passion, far more like Catullus. As Macleod comments:

> 'It is the poet who, like his legendary heroine, is eaten up with longing (51 ff., 107 ff.), whereas nothing is said about Lesbia's feelings, if any, towards her lover; we only know that now she is less devoted to him than she might be (135 ff.).'[3]

---

2. An entire monograph has recently been devoted to LXVIII: B. Coppel, *Das Alliusgedicht*, Heidelberg 1973, containing an extensive bibliography of work done on the poem. (Coppel, however, deals almost exclusively with the epistolary introduction and conclusion to the poem, and has very little to say about the myth.) Useful discussions of LXVIII may be found in G. Lieberg, *Puella Divina*, Amsterdam 1962, pp.152-263; E. Schäfer, *Das Verhältnis von Erlebnis und Kunstgestalt bei Catull*, Wiesbaden 1966, pp.75-95; G. Williams, *Tradition and Originality*, Oxford 1968, pp.229-33. Most recently, and most usefully from our point of view, there is the excellent detailed treatment specifically of the myth in LXVIII by C.W. Macleod, 'A Use of Myth in Ancient Poetry', *CQ* XXIV, 1974, 82-93, pp.82-8.

3. *Cf.* Macleod, *ibid.*, p.83.

Secondly, there is a further parallel between Laodamia and Catullus in that both lost, far away at Troy, one whom they dearly loved - Catullus his brother, Laodamia her husband, Protesilaus.[4] Thirdly, the poet implicitly contrasts the faithful loving wife, Laodamia, with the apparently indifferent and unfaithful mistress, Lesbia. Yet he does also suggest that, in imagination at least, he conceived of Lesbia as a kind of wife to him (*cf.*134, Cupid in the dress of Hymen; contrast 143 ff.), and to that extent she was like the devoted Laodamia.[5] Fourthly, Catullus indicates that there was some kind of flaw underlying the relationship between Laodamia and Protesilaus; a sacrifice to the gods was omitted before their wedding, and this set in train their subsequent misfortunes (75-80). In so far as Lesbia is like a bride to the poet, there is just a suggestion of a similar offence - her stepping upon the threshold of the house where she used to meet with Catullus would have been an 'irregular and ill-omened action'.[6]

All these implicit links, then, between the myth and its context, turn out to be far more significant than the simple explicit connexion from which the story of Laodamia takes its starting-point and to which it returns. The primary function of the myth is not simply to illustrate the manner of Lesbia's arrival at her and Catullus' *rendezvous*. The poet's account of the relationship between Laodamia and Protesilaus has as its chief purpose - a purpose it is able to fulfil because of all the implicit connexions with its context,

---

4. *Cf.* Macleod, *ibid.*, pp.84 f. We may observe that Catullus is thus, through his account of Laodamia's love for Protesilaus, expressing both his familial love for his brother and his passion for Lesbia. In the two similes in 119-29, characterizing the heroine's feelings and recounting, first, the deep affection of a grandfather for his late-born grandson, then, the sensual passion of a dove for its mate, the poet seems to separate out the two kinds of emotion he embodies in the figure of Laodamia.

5. *Cf.* Macleod, *ibid.*, pp.85 ff.

6. Macleod, *ibid.*, p.87.

outlined above - rather to lend form, and meaning, to the two most important relationships of his own life, that with his brother on the one hand, and that with Lesbia on the other.

Two further details of Catullus' handling of myth here should be noted. Most commentators and critics of LXVIII have observed that the mythic narrative (and indeed the section 41-160 as a whole) is cast in the form of a ring-composition.[7] To represent it very schematically, the sequence of ideas is: Lesbia's arrival - Laodamia - Troy - Catullus' brother - Troy - Laodamia - Lesbia's arrival. In this way, as is usual when a mythological illustration occurs in 'ring-form', the point explicitly to be illustrated by the myth is repeated before and after it, and the most important element of the myth is on each occasion immediately juxtaposed with that point. The other detail to note, is that Catullus uses significant verbal echoes as a further means to tie the Laodamia myth to its context. The poet gives some prominence in the story of Laodamia and Protesilaus to the *domus* mentioned in *l*.74.[8] Similarly, in the story of his and Lesbia's love, the *domus* made available to them by Allius has an important place (*cf.* lines 68 and 156). And again, Catullus twice uses *domus* in the figurative sense of 'family', 'household' in connexion with his brother's death (22 and 94). These verbal echoes should not be pressed too hard,[9] but nor should the formal linking role they play be ignored.

In poem LXVIII, then, Catullus handles myth very

---

7. See, e.g., F.O. Copley, 'The Unity of Catullus 68: a further view', *CPh* 52, 1957, 29-32, and the introductory note to the poem in Kroll's and Quinn's editions.

8. For the exact significance of Catullus' phrase *domum inceptam frustra* (74 f.) recalling Homer's δόμος ἡμιτελής (*Il*.II,701), see Lieberg (*op.cit.* n.2) pp.220 f.

9. As they are, e.g., by C. Witke, *Ennarratio Catulliana*, Leiden 1968, pp.39 f. and Coppel (*op. cit.* n.2) pp.54 ff.

much in the manner of the Hellenistic poets discussed above in Chapter I section (ii). Like them[10] he assigns to the myth he uses a number of implicit functions which succeed in making the mythological episode an essential part of his poem, and which, upon examination, are seen to be much more significant than the myth's *explicit* function. Again, like some at least of those poets,[11] Catullus presents his myth in ring-form, a device which serves to emphasize its explicit purpose. And finally, as certain of the Hellenistic poets,[12] he sets up significant verbal echoes between the mythic section of the poem and the context it illustrates. So it would appear to be from Callimachus, Apollonius and Theocritus that Catullus learned these techniques by which myth could be made an essential part even of a small-scale poem. The great difference between the Roman poet and his Greek predecessors lies, of course, in the *application* which myth is given in their respective works. Catullus, like none of them, not even, so far as we can see, the catalogue-elegists, introduces myth into LXVIII to illumine the experiences of his life which have touched him most nearly, his love-affair with Lesbia and the loss of his brother.

Amid the loss of so much ancient poetry - particularly that of the Hellenistic catalogue-elegists and of Gallus - the question, how much influence Catullus LXVIII had upon the Augustan elegists' use of myth, is a difficult one to answer accurately. On the evidence as we have it the answer must be an equivocal one. The myth of Catullus LXVIII seems more to have *anticipated* (if we may so express it) the later elegists' use of myth than to have influenced it. On the one hand the love-elegists apparently learned from Catullus' poem that myth could have a vital role to play even in personal poetry, that it could be used in a great variety of different ways to illustrate their experience in love. And we find

---

10. See above, especially pp.31 f.; 36; 43 f.
11. See above, particularly pp.25 ff.; 38; 45.
12. See above, pp.29; 44 ff.; 55.

the elegists using the same techniques - of carefully structuring myth, of setting up verbal echoes between it and the matter it illustrates, of allowing it allusive and implicit functions - that we found in Catullus LXVIII and earlier in Hellenistic poetry. It is possible that it was via Catullus that the Augustan love-elegists went back and learned from the Hellenistic poets (who first made extensive use of these techniques) how the mythological exemplum could be fully integrated into a short, though highly polished, poem. Yet, on the other hand, the myth of Laodamia and Protesilaus as we find it in Catullus LXVIII remains - like the elegy as a whole - in many respects something unique, *sui generis*. The extremely elaborate structure of the mythic narrative, the poet's intrusion into it at 77 f., the sudden reversion to 'real life' right at the centre of the narrative, the extraordinary mythological comparison at 109 ff. and the long straggling similes of lines 119 ff., are unparalleled in Roman love-elegy. The Augustan elegists, although they no doubt learned a great deal from Catullus' Laodamia myth, never produced anything quite like it.

(ii) Gallus[13]

From the point of view of our inquiry into myth and personal experience in Roman love-elegy, the disappearance of the four books of Gallus' *Amores* dealing with his love of the actress Cytheris, whom he called 'Lycoris',[14] is

---

13. On Gallus we have most recently D.O. Ross' book, *Backgrounds to Augustan Poetry : Gallus, Elegy and Rome*, Cambridge 1975, full of speculations *à la* Skutsch, which are in general more ingenious than convincing. For a more sober assessment of Gallus and his works we should consult J.-P. Boucher's *Gaius Cornelius Gallus*, Paris 1966. See further (to name just a few among a host of studies) F. Skutsch, *Aus Vergil's Frühzeit*, Leipzig 1901; F. Jacoby,'Zur Entstehung der Römischen Elegie', *RhM* 60, 1905, 38-105, Sec.II; H. Bardon, *La Littérature Latine Inconnue*, vol.II, Paris 1956, pp.34-44.

14. *Cf.* Servius' comment on Virgil *Ecl.*X,1: 'Gallus ... fuit poeta eximius; ... amorum suorum de Cytheride scripsit libros quattuor.'

unfortunate in the extreme. Although scholars seem reluctant to admit it, the fact is that on the evidence we have at present we must continue to be almost totally ignorant of the nature of Gallus' poetry. It is, of course, tempting to speculate, as did Skutsch earlier this century, that we possess epitomes of the poems of Gallus in Virgil's *Eclogues* X and VI, or as does Ross more recently:

> 'We may understand, very generally, that Gallus' first elegies were mythological narratives hung sometimes upon the convenient peg of Lycoris and a personal experience ...; but that in his last elegies Lycoris had become a convention that dominated the poems, with myths serving now only as brief *exempla* ... Only some such development of Gallan elegy will take us easily and naturally from Catullus 68 to Propertius' *Monobiblos*.'[15]

But the evidence is just not strong enough to support such elaborate hypotheses. At any rate, no new theories will be offered here. Gallus is mentioned for two reasons only.

The first reason is that Ovid quite clearly states that Gallus was the first of the love-elegists at Rome: in his autobiographical elegy *Tristia* IV,10 at 53 f. he says of Tibullus:

> Successor fuit hic tibi, Galle, Propertius illi,
> quartus ab his serie temporis ipse fui.

Thus Gallus was regarded, by Ovid at least, as the first Roman love-elegist; and so - although we have none of his writings - he must always be of considerable literary-historical importance. Secondly, we have some evidence that Gallus had a taste for *recherché* Hellenistic mythology. We may glean so much from the comment of pseudo-Probus on *Ecl.*X,50: 'Euphorion elegiarum scriptor Chalcidensis fuit, cuius in scribendo secutus colorem uidetur Cornelius Gallus'; but we do not know whether this Euphorionic 'color' was to be found in Gallus' *Amores* or in other poetry possibly

---

15. Ross (*op.cit.* n.13) pp.109 f.

written by him.[16] And then there is Parthenius' tantalizing *Preface* to his Ἐρωτικὰ Παθήματα which raises so many more questions than it answers:

> Μάλιστά σοι δοκῶν ἁρμόττειν, Κορνήλιε Γάλλε, τὴν ἄθροισιν τῶν ἐρωτικῶν παθημάτων, ἀναλεξάμενος ὡς ὅτι μάλιστα ἐν βραχυτάτοις ἀπέσταλκα ... αὐτῷ τέ σοι παρέσται εἰς ἔπη καὶ ἐλεγείας ἀνάγειν τὰ μάλιστα ἐξ αὐτῶν ἁρμόδια. μηδὲ διὰ τὸ μὴ παρεῖναι τὸ περιττὸν αὐτοῖς, ὃ δὴ σὺ μετέρχῃ, χεῖρον περὶ αὐτῶν ἐννοηθῇς· οἱονεὶ γὰρ ὑπομνηματίων τρόπον αὐτὰ συνελεξάμεθα, καὶ σοι νυνὶ τὴν χρῆσιν ὁμοίαν, ὡς ἔοικε, παρέξεται.[17]

Did Gallus actually take up Parthenius' suggestion and use the latter's book of unhappy love-stories as source-material for his elegies (or ἔπη)? We have no way of knowing. But it is worth noting that, if he did, his *Amores* must have had a tone very different from that of the love-elegies of Tibullus, Propertius and Ovid. For whereas the mythological references used by the three last-mentioned poets are generally drawn from the well-known heroic-, epic-, and tragic cycles, Parthenius' myths, derived mainly from Hellenistic poets and logographers,[18] are strange bizarre creations, recounting homosexual loves and every variety of unnatural relationship between father and daughter, sister and brother, mother and son.

Gallus, then, remains an enigma. We cannot be certain to what extent, or even whether at all, he used myth to illustrate personal experience in his love-elegies. To see myth employed in this way we must turn to the first of the extant love-elegists, the poet named by Ovid as Gallus' '*successor*', Tibullus.

---

16. Whether Gallus wrote other poetry, in particular whether he wrote the ἔπη suggested by Parthenius (see below), is a matter of conjecture and dispute. Skutsch (*op.cit.* n.13) Ch.II, particularly pp.38 ff., maintained that Gallus wrote a whole series of 'epyllia' as well as a didactic poem; recently Ross (*op.cit.*) pp.43-6 argues that he wrote four books of *Amores* only.

17. Ἐρωτικὰ Παθήματα 1 (Loeb ed.) For a convenient summary of what we know about Parthenius, his works and influence, see N.B. Crowther, 'Parthenius and Roman Poetry', *Mnemosyne* XXIX, 1976, 65-71.

18. Almost all of Parthenius' stories are preceded by scholia which name the sources on which he drew.

Chapter 3

TIBULLUS

It is commonly maintained by Tibullus' commentators and critics, that the poet had very little to do with myth.[1] But this view is accurate only up to a certain point. If we limit the term 'myth' to the sorts of myths employed by Propertius and Ovid, which are largely Greek heroic myths, then it is indeed true that little mythology is to be found in Tibullus.[2] The catalogue of sinners in Tartarus in I,3,73-80, Ixion, Tityos (a giant rather than a hero, to be precise), Tantalus, the Danaides; heroes whose attributes were made famous by poetry, Nisus and Pelops in I,4,63 f.; Peleus and Thetis in I,5,45 f.; the learned reference made by means of a hero's name, 'Mopsopio' in I,7,54; and Circe and Medea as types of the witch in II,4,55, fill up the list. And in most of these cases it is noticeable that the mythological reference is not very significant, but is introduced for the purpose merely of decoration or illustration.

However, these few brief references to heroic myth - the kind of myth later used so widely by Propertius and Ovid - are less characteristic of Tibullus' art than

---

1. Margaret Hubbard writes of Tibullus: 'He rejects myth, both ornamental and structural' (*OCD*^{2}, *s.v.* 'Tibullus'); J.P. Elder: 'With Propertius mythology is truly functional. With Tibullus mythological allusions are few and then mainly decorative.' ('Tibullus: Tersus atque Elegans', in *Critical Essays, Elegy and Lyric* ed. Sullivan, London 1962, p.69); A. Rostagni: 'Del mito ... scarsissima è la sopravvivenza in Tibullo ...' ('L'influenza greca sulle origini dell' elegia erotica latina', in *Fondation Hardt, Entretiens* vol.II, Geneva 1956, p.81); *cf.* also G. Luck, *The Latin Love Elegy*^{2}, London 1969, p.83. In general, the most balanced account of Tibullus' use of myth is that of M. Schuster (*Tibull-Studien*, Vienna 1930, pp.42-4) who, taking note of views similar to those quoted above, remarks: 'In der Tat wird von Tibull nicht selten Mythologisches berührt ...' (p.43).

2. W. Wimmel in *Der frühe Tibull*, Munich 1968, is more careful than most in his statements about Tibullus' use of myth. He refers specifically to a lack of exempla drawn from *heroic* mythology in the poet (*ibid.*, p.10).

his more extensive employment of mythology of other sorts. These other sorts comprise the myth of Osiris as εὑρετής of agriculture and viticulture in I,7,29-36; the myths of Elysium and Tartarus in I,3,57-66 and 67-82; the description of the underworld in I,10,35-8; the myth of Apollo's enslavement to Admetus in II,3,11-28; the foundation legend of Rome in II,5,19-64; and the depiction of a mythic past in I,3,35-48; I,10,7-10 and 19-24; and II,3,69-76. Moreover all of these mythological passages, far from being simply illustrative or decorative, are fully integrated into the contexts of the poems in which they occur and perform important functions (of various sorts) in those poems. In this chapter the brief allusions to heroic myths enumerated above (excepting the list of sinners in I,3,73-80 which occurs within a wider mythic framework), and the myths of I,7 and II,5, will not be dealt with. The brief allusions, as has been indicated, perform no more than an illustrative or decorative function, while the myths concerned with Osiris (I,7) and the foundation of Rome (II,5) are rather special cases, closely related to the purpose of the peculiar occasional poems in which they occur.[3] In what follows it is the mythic sections of (i) I,3 (ii) I,10 and (iii) II,3 - all of which are used by the poet to illumine certain aspects of his personal experience he has presented in these poems - that will be discussed in detail. We begin with the various myths of I,3.

(i) I,3: The Golden Age (35-48) Elysium (57-66) Tartarus (67-82)

Before the myths of the Golden Age, Elysium and Tartarus in I,3 are analysed in detail, it is necessary to give a brief formal description of the poem, so that

---

3. See the analyses of I,5 by F.W. Levy, 'Der Geburtstag des Freundes. Eine Studie zu Tibull I,7', *SIFC* 7, 1929, 101-11 and 169-70; and F. Klingner, 'Tibulls Geburtstagsgedicht an Messalla (1.7)', *Eranos* XLIX, 1955, 117-36; and of II,5 by H. Merklin, 'Zu Aufbau und Absicht der Messalinus-Elegie Tibulls', in *Festschrift Büchner*, Wiesbaden 1970.

the place of the myths within the scheme of the whole may be appreciated.

Tibullus begins the elegy with a brief evocation of his immediate desperate plight, his illness far from home in 'Phaeacia' (1-8), and ends it by anticipating a return to his beloved Delia (83-94).[4] In between this introduction and this conclusion there is a twice-repeated movement from past to present to future, first when the poet deals directly with the realities of his situation (in *ll.*9-34), second when he deals with his situation indirectly, through the medium of myth (in the Golden Age myth of 35-48, and in that of Elysium and Tartarus in 57-82; a brief transitional section, 49-56, interposes itself between the two myths). This repeated temporal movement is well marked by the poet, as may be observed from a closer examination of the text.

The transition to the first 'past' section (*ll.*9-20, to which may be added 21 f. containing the poet's present reflection on the past occurrences he has just related) occurs in 10 f., the shift in time being marked by *cum mitteret* and *ante consuluisse*. Following this temporal transition the poet handles, from Delia's and his own standpoint, his departure from Rome. He then returns to the present in *ll.*23 ff., signalling this return by means of the thrice-repeated emphatic *nunc* (*ll.*23, 27). (It should be noted, however, that his mind is still to some extent lingering on the past, as *memini* indicates.) The appeal to Isis to save him, made by the poet in this 'present' section, now leads his mind on towards the future, towards the possible effects of that appeal. The 'future' aspect of these lines appears from *ut ... persoluens ... sedeat ... debeat ... contingat*. Tibullus anticipates Delia's thanksgiving and his own return

---

4. The two sections 1-8 and 83-94 are seen by a number of critics to provide a definite introduction and conclusion to I,3. Thus, e.g., F. Leo, *Über Einige Elegien Tibulls*, Berlin 1881, p.25; E. Wölfflin, 'Zur Komposition des Tibulls', *RhM* 49, 1894, 270-4; and R. Hanslik, 'Tibulls Elegie I,3' in *Festschrift Büchner*, Wiesbaden 1970, p.145, in their respective analyses of the poem.

home to his Lares and Penates.[5]

Throughout lines 9-34 as his thoughts move from past to present to future Tibullus deals only with the realities (and possible realities, as when he anticipates his return home) of his situation. After *l*.34 the past-present-future movement is repeated, only now the poet approaches his situation in a new way, through the medium of myth. In 35-48 he takes us back far beyond the time of his departure from Rome, to a mythic period in the remote past, the return to the past being marked by *Saturno rege, uiuebant, priusquam*. In 49-56 Tibullus deals once more with the present, with his real situation as opposed to the earlier time of myth. The juxtaposition of the happy mythic past outlined in 35-48 with the brutal real present now described, is underlined by *nunc ... nunc ... nunc* in 49 f. signalling the poet's abrupt return to present reality (cp. *nunc ... nunc ... nunc* in *ll*.23 and 27 of the earlier 'present' section 23-8). At *ll*.57 ff. Tibullus moves away once more into the future and back into the realm of myth. *ducet* (58) at the beginning of the Elysium myth and *sit* (81) at the end of the description of Tartarus indicate the setting of this second mythic section in the future. (The 'futurischer Stil' thus indicated then continues on to the end of the elegy in the poet's closing anticipation of his return to Delia.)

Thus, by having the mythic section repeat the past-present-future movement of the earlier part of the poem, Tibullus integrates it into the scheme of I,3 as a whole. This close attention to form should alone lead us to expect that the myths of the Golden Age, Elysium and Tartarus constitute more than simple illustrative or decorative digressions; and this expectation is borne out by a close examination of the

---

5. The 'present-future' aspect of lines 23-34 is usually ignored by critics, who classify them as reminiscence about the past; see W. Wimmel (*op. cit.* n.2) p.225 and R. Hanslik (*art.cit.* n.4) p.145. This aspect is, however, correctly noted by B. Petersen, *Kommentar zu Tibull's Todes-Elegie (I.3)*, diss. Freiburg im Breisgau 1952, p.64.

details of the myths. In what follows the structure and content of the myths will be examined so that we may see just how closely Tibullus connects myth with what is presented as personal experience in this poem. We shall look first at the Golden Age narrative in *ll.*35-48.[6]

At line 35 Tibullus moves away from his own unhappy situation into a description of the happy time when Saturn reigned. He makes no explicit connexion between the myth and his own experience, yet the contrast between the two is plain. In the opening lines of the mythic section (35-40) he tells us that roadbuilding, seafaring and voyages to unknown lands were absent from the Golden Age - but it is precisely these practices that have brought him to his present desperate situation. Roads took him away from Delia (13 f.), ships took him to 'Phaeacia' (see the situation of 1-3), where he lies in a land that is foreign to him (*l.*3). It is clear that the poet here chooses, for the sake of the contrast thus created, to represent as absent from the happy past just those things which have most harmed him in the present. The manner in which he does this must be more closely examined.

'Men were happy', the poet says 'before ...' - and he goes on to name a practice characteristic of the present (*ll.*35 f.). *priusquam* here supplies us with the first hint that the poet is in fact talking about the present under the guise of the mythic past. Our suspicion that this is so grows with *nondum* in 37, and is then confirmed by the long series of negatives *nec ... non (septies) ... nec* which runs on right to the end of the Golden Age section. In each case, some aspect of the present that the poet deplores is introduced into this passage ostensibly about the mythic past,

---

6. There are some useful comments on this section of the poem in Petersen, *ibid.*, pp.38-44.

simply by having a negative attached to it;[7] and for the most part the poet deplores just those aspects of the present which he represents, in the surrounding context, as having brought him to death's door. Thus the description of the Golden Age, since it is couched almost entirely in terms of a present which is harmful to the poet, cannot fail to contrast with the poet's experience in this present as outlined elsewhere in the poem.

The contrast between 35-40 and the earlier portion of I,3 has now been noted; but it should be noted further that this contrast is strengthened by verbal echoes. *uias*, *undas* and *ignotis terris* (36; 37 and 39) in the opening section of the Golden Age passage, pick up *uias*, *undas* and *ignotis terris* occurring in the identical positions in the verse (in 14; 1 and 3) earlier in the elegy, where the poet deals with the realities of his present circumstances. This technique of underlining the connexion between myth and the context it illustrates by means of verbal echoes is precisely what we found in Hellenistic poetry, in the passages of Callimachus and Apollonius examined earlier.[8] It seems that in his handling of myth, as in other aspects of his poetry, Tibullus has come under the influence of Alexandrianism.[9]

---

7. The negative way in which the Golden Age is characterised here is noted by most commentators on the passage. H. Eisenberger ('Der Innere Zusammenhang der Motive in Tibulls Gedicht I,3', *Hermes* 88, 1960, 188-97) states the matter succinctly: 'Die Darstellung [*sc.* der Goldenen Zeit] ist bis V.49 f. formal negativ gehalten, die frühere und die gegenwärtige Situation werden dadurch zugleich beleuchtet.' (p.192) The same technique is used in their respective descriptions of the Golden Age by Aratus, *Phaen.* 108 ff.; Virgil, *Georg.*I, 125 ff. and II,539; Ovid, *Met.*I, 89 ff. (which passage, however, seems to me to have been directly influenced by Tibullus).

8. Above, Ch.1, in particular pp.29 and 44 ff.

9. For Tibullus as an 'Alexandrian' poet see Schuster (*op.cit.* n.1) pp.36-56; Luck (*op.cit.* n.1) ch.5; A.W. Bulloch, 'Tibullus and the Alexandrians', *PCPhS* 199, 1973, 71-89.

In the central portion of the mythic section, *ll.* 41-6, the theme of the Golden Age is discursively developed. There is, as we shall see, some connexion between this central section and a later part of the poem, but in the main it serves simply to add definition to the idea of a mythic past from which present-day evils were absent. The sequence of negatives in 37-40 is continued by the negatives in 41-4, and the formal continuity thus achieved disguises the transition from that part of the myth which contrasts directly with the poet's experience, to that part which simply adds definition. It is perhaps significant that *ll.*41-6 evoke the idea of a specifically *pastoral* paradise; this seems to represent an ideal towards which our poet's mind is constantly attracted.[10] The only details of the present mythic section positively characterised -

> ipsae mella dabant quercus, ultroque ferebant
> obuia securis ubera lactis oues. (I,3,45 f.)

- have to do with the ease with which Golden Age men were provided for by a bountiful Nature.

In the final couplet of the Golden Age section Tibullus declares:

> non acies, non ira fuit, non bella, nec ensem
> immiti saeuus duxerat arte faber. (I,3,47 f.)

Once again it is clear that the poet, while apparently describing the mythic past, is in fact alluding to the cruel realities of the present; and the technique by means of which he does this, is the same as the one he employed earlier, namely negative characterisation of the past in terms of the present. By simply attaching *non, non* and *nec* to *acies, ira, bella* and *ensem*, the poet projects these present-day evils back into the remote past. It was seen earlier that Tibullus' purpose in introducing present-day topics into the opening lines of the Golden Age narrative, was to create a contrast between the happy past and his own present plight. The

---

10. See I,1; 2,70-4; 5,19-36; 10,7-28 and 39-50; II,1; 3,68-72; 5,83-100.

same purpose is at work in the final couplet of the mythic section. Here the lines (47 f.) quoted above, with their negative characterisation of the past, give way immediately to a positive couplet describing modern evils -

> nunc Ioue sub domino caedes et uulnera semper
> nunc mare, nunc leti mille repente uiae. (I,3,49 f.)

- the description being hammered home by the thrice-repeated *nunc*. The already powerful contrast between past and present is also further strengthened by *Ioue sub domino* (49) in the opening line of the 'present' section, picking up *Saturno rege* (35) at the start of the 'past' section. The poet places both eras upon the same plane by associating each with a tutelary deity.

The connexion between 47 f., 49 f. and Tibullus' own experience, lies in the fact that the poet was on his way to war (*cf.* 1 f.; 55 f.; 82) when he was stricken by the mortal illness of *ll.*3 ff.; in one sense war may be said to be the cause of his present hopeless condition. But if he had lived in the reign of Saturn, which he has represented as innocent of war, he would not be in this condition. As it is, since war and innumerable ways of dying are an essential part of Jove's reign in which the poet actually lives, it is hardly surprising that he is close to death.

It should be clear by now that the myth of the Golden Age in 35-48 serves more than a simple illustrative or decorative function. Although Tibullus skilfully lends a formal unity to these lines by casting them almost entirely in the negative, as regards its content the piece falls into three sections. To summarize: in the opening section (35-40) are set out those details of the mythic past which contrast with the poet's experience as represented in the earlier part of the poem (the contrast being reinforced by verbal echoes); in the central panel (41-6) come details not directly connected with the poet's case but which add definition to the idea of a Golden Age; and in the third section (47 f.) aspects of the past contrasting directly with aspects of the present which are harmful to the poet,

are described. Thus, by the structure he gives to the Golden Age narrative, Tibullus juxtaposes those parts of the myth which relate to his experience with the lines detailing that experience (in the case of 47 f. and 49 ff. the juxtaposition is immediate, in 35-40 and 1-14 it is more remote), while the discursive part of the myth which simply adds definition is made to occupy the centre of the narrative.

This allusive implicit function, however, complex as it is, is not the only one served by the myth of the Golden Age. The myth also fulfills a structural function in the poem, making a transition from one of its parts to another;[11] and it is able to do this because, as has been shown, it does not simply illustrate a single point but faces two ways at once. Lines 35-40 look back to the opening part of the poem and to the situation outlined there, while 47 f. look forward to the theme of the following section, 49-56. The transition is disguised by the fact that 35-40 and 47 f. both belong to a single, apparently continuous, description of the Golden Age.

In the passage which follows the myth, Tibullus seems to come to a new understanding of his situation. Earlier, in *ll.*1-4, he simply told us he was ill and near to death. Then, in 21 f., after describing his unsuccessful attempts to delay his separation from Delia, he said:

> audeat inuito ne quis discedere Amore,
> aut sciat egressum se prohibente deo.

The implication of this couplet was, clearly, that it was his departure from Rome *inuito Amore, prohibente deo*, that was responsible for his present plight. Now, however, the depiction of a Golden Age from which war and all the means of violent death were absent, brings the poet to the realisation that it is rather the ferocity of the present age of Jove, in which there are *leti mille repente uiae*, that has brought him to death's

---

11. This is observed by Petersen (*diss.cit.* n.5) p.68.

door. This new realisation justifies his plea to Jove for mercy in 51 f., and seems moreover to be reflected by the epitaph he chooses for himself in 55 f.:

> hic iacet immiti consumptus morte Tibullus,
> Messallam terra dum sequiturque mari.

He seems now to be saying that it is the military expedition - an inevitable product of the present violent age - he took part in, and not any offence against Love, that is responsible for his death.[12]

The relevance of the Golden Age account to his personal experience was not explicitly stated by Tibullus but was left to be inferred by the reader. In the case of the Elysium myth (occupying *ll.*57-66) no such inference is necessary, since the poet actually introduces himself into the myth in the opening couplet:

> sed me, quod facilis tenero sum semper Amori,[13]
> ipsa Venus campos ducet in Elysios. (I,3,57 f.)

But the details of this couplet remain somewhat obscure until we come to *l.*65 - *illic est, cuicumque rapax Mors uenit amanti* - where we learn that this Elysium is, wholly or in part (Tibullus' formulation does not exclude the normal view of the place), a *lovers'* Elysium.[14] But Tibullus himself was precisely one to whom *rapax Mors uenit amanti* - witness his dying thoughts of Delia (9 ff.), his attempts to delay his departure from her prior to his illness (15-20). And

---

12. For this interpretation of 49 ff. see Petersen, *ibid.*, who is followed by Eisenberger (*art.cit.* n.7) pp.192 f. and Hanslik (*art.cit.* n.4) pp.143 f.

13. The poet's new conception, that death is unavoidable in the present age, enables him to say this. Earlier it had seemed that Amor was responsible for Tibullus' predicament, but that idea was modified by the thoughts of 49 ff. Hence there is no conflict between the couplet 'audeat inuito ne quis discedere Amore,/aut sciat egressum se prohibente deo' (21 f.) and the clause *quod facilis tenero sum semper Amori* (57).

14. This idea is first suggested, before its final formulation in *l.*65, by *ll.*63 f. The conception of Elysium as a place where faithful lovers go, appears to be a Tibullan invention. The poet gives the old myth a new, erotic-elegiac, meaning.

this explains why the poet's being open to Amor was given as a *reason* for his attaining Elysium in *l*.57, and why Venus appeared in the role of ψυχοπομπός in *l*.58.[15]

So far only the opening and closing couplets of the Elysium section and their connexion with the poet's personal experience as set out earlier in the poem, have been dealt with. What of the lines in between, 59-64? These lines, as was noted by Dissen,[16] are designed to add definition to the picture of a heaven specifically for lovers. There is song (59 f.), perfume (*casiam*, 61), roses for weaving garlands (61 f.) Amor is occupied (64). Even the small detail *myrtea serta* in 66 adds to the general picture; the detail is appropriate here since the myrtle was sacred to Venus.[17]

The myth of Elysium, then, can in no way be regarded as merely incidental to the theme of elegy I,3. On the contrary, the myth of a lovers' heaven here enables Tibullus to extend the theme of his poem forward into the afterlife - which by its very nature cannot be conceived of in other than mythical terms - just as the myth of the Golden Age enabled him to move back into the prehistoric past. Lines 57-66 constitute a development of, not a digression from, the poem's theme. The immediately preceding section of the elegy (*ll*.49-56) showed us that death was inevitable in the age of Jove. Accordingly the poet, far from regarding his proximity to death as due to Love (as he had seemed to do in 21 f.)

---

15. A most unusual role for the goddess - *cf*. the commentators *ad loc*. and P. Grimal, 'Vénus et L'Immortalité (à propos de Tibulle, I,3,37 [*sic*; should be 'I,3,57'] et suiv.)', in *Hommages Deonna*, Brussels 1957, pp.258-62.

16. *Cf*. his comment on 59 ff.: 'Sequitur iam descriptio horum locorum [*sc*. Elysii Camporum] accommodata huius elegiae rationi ... talis hic depingitur beatitas, qualis *amanti* iuveni convenit ...' (his italics).

17. Noted by K.F. Smith, *comm. ad loc*.

now sees it as due to the spirit of the time, and sees himself as *facilis Amori*. It is this new understanding of his situation by the poet that the Elysium section develops. The myth reveals that *pietas* in love is rewarded hereafter, and outlines the joys awaiting the poet whose faithfulness in love has qualified him for admission to this lovers' heaven.

The parallels and contrasts between the Golden Age and Elysium myths should be noted. First, there is an obvious similarity of structure: in both passages opening and closing sections which are connected with the poet's personal experience enclose a central section the function of which is to lend definition to the particular myth concerned. Second, whereas in the Elysium section all is positively characterised, the description of the Golden Age is almost entirely negative;[18] and the one positive couplet in that description -

> ipsae mella dabant quercus, ultroque ferebant
> obuia securis ubera lactis oues. (I,3,45 f.)

- involving the idea of Nature's unsolicited bounty, finds its counterpart in *ll.*61 f. of the Elysium section -

> fert casiam non culta seges, totosque per agros
> floret odoratis terra benigna rosis

- where the same idea is at work. Third, war and fighting were said to be absent from the Golden Age (*ll.* 47 f.); in Elysium there *are* battles (*l.*64) - but they are battles of Love (there is also an obvious contrast here with the real, bloody warfare of 49 f.).[19] All these links between the two myths and their respective contexts in the poem serve to strengthen the unity of the whole and make it impossible to regard the myths as mere colourful digressions.

When the Tartarus myth (*ll.*67-82) is first introduced,

---

18. For this formal contrast between the myths see Eisenberger (*art.cit.* n.7) p.193.

19. Exploitation of the contrast between figurative warfare of love and real warfare, is something of a favourite device with Tibullus; *cf.*I,1,73 ff.; and I,10,29 f., 33 f., 49 f. set against 53-6.

it seems intended simply as a dark contrast to the lovely evocation of Elysium; there does not appear to be any connexion between the apparently general description of the place of punishment in the underworld and the poet's situation as represented in the poem. If, however, lines 67-82 are more closely examined, it will be seen that the poet, by a series of gradual transitions, narrows down the scope of his description of Tartarus until it focusses on carefully selected details very relevant to his case.

The couplet 67 f. at the start simply sets the scene in the underworld; in the four lines that follow (69-72) there is some indication that the wicked in general are persecuted there; in the next eight lines (73-80) individual sinners undergoing punishment are named. In 73 the first of the great sinners, Ixion, is introduced. It should be noted that both his offence and his punishment are mentioned, our attention being directed in particular to his offence, all the details of which are compressed into the hexameter *illic Iunonem temptare Ixionis ausi* (73). The poet thus reminds us that Ixion's crime was one of passion. In the following two couplets (*ll.*75-8) Tibullus goes on to name two more famous sinners, Tityos and Tantalus, but in their case the punishment only, and not the offence, is described.[20] Finally, in a couplet very similar in structure to the one involving Ixion, the poet once more specifies, in the case of the Danaides, both offence and punishment:

> et Danai proles, Veneris quod numina laesit,
> in caua Lethaeas dolia portat aquas. (I,3,79 f.)

Again in these lines, as in 73, the poet draws our attention to the offence by compressing the description thereof into the hexameter.

Tibullus' gradual narrowing-down of the description of Tartarus, and the way in which he describes the famous

---

20. The poet does perhaps mean us to recall Tityos' crime, which was very similar to Ixion's. Both tried to rape a goddess, the former Leto, the latter Hera.

offenders detained there, are deliberately calculated in order to achieve certain effects. By reducing the scope of his description of the underworld until only great sinners are being named, and by specifying punishments in the case of all four offenders mentioned, the poet succeeds in conveying the idea of a Hell of great torment for sinners; and, more importantly, by mentioning the offence in Ixion's and the Danaides' case only, where the crime was one of passion, Tibullus manages to suggest that the punishments of the underworld are reserved particularly for those who have offended against Love. Thus the poet's version of the Tartarus myth, with its suggestion of a hell for wicked lovers, balances exactly his version of the Elysium myth in 57-66, which evoked the idea of a heaven for those faithful in love. But, as was said above, there is more to the Tartarus myth than simply the contrast (however exact) it affords to the myth of Elysium.

By all the means described in the preceding paragraph - and in particular by placing last the exemplum of the Danaides, with its explicit mention of an offence against the Goddess of Love[21] - the poet prepares the way for a return to his own case in the couplet:

> illic sit quicumque meos uiolauit amores,
> optauit lentas et mihi militias. (I,3,81 f.)

Tibullus here casts into the hell for wicked lovers he has so carefully prepared, the rival who has

---

21. A very similar use of an exemplum involving the Danaides occurs in Horace *Odes* III,11,23 ff. There too the exemplum aids the transition from a list of sinners in the underworld to a particular point connected with the poet's experience.

done violence[22] to his (the poet's) *amores*.[23] By this blending of myth (the idea of a lovers' hell) and 'reality' (the rival who has harmed him) the poet brings the Tartarus section into contact with his personal experience, just as he did the Elysium section, where he introduced himself into a mythical lovers' heaven. He was to be rewarded in Elysium for his *pietas*, his rival is to be punished in Tartarus for his *impietas*, in love.

A final point to note is the manner in which, by close attention to form, the poet fits the couplet 81 f. into the scheme of a Tartarus in which great sinners, particularly great sinners against Love, are punished. This pattern is woven in the five couplets from *l*.73 to 82. Tibullus binds these ten lines closely together by repetition of *illic*, which stands at the start of both the first and last couplets (in 73 and 81), and after the first two words of the central couplet (in *l*.77), of this section.[24] The formal parallels between these couplets work the final two lines, in which the poet's rival is mentioned, into a closely-knit pattern involving the great sinners of the underworld. The rival is thus placed upon the same plane as the famous evildoers Ixion, Tityos, Tantalus and the Danaides.

---

22. Hanslik (*art.cit.* n.4) p.144 interprets the precise meaning of *uiolauit amores* convincingly: ' ... der Frevel eines imaginären Nebenbuhlers und eine Verletzung der *amores* des Tibull [kann] nur darin bestehen, dass ein solcher ihm eben sich lang hinziehenden Kriegsdienst (*lentas militias*) wünschte, um bei Delia eine Chance zu haben ... Das Wesen des *uiolare amores* ist eben nur das *optare lentas militias* von v.82.'

23. Notice the very specific nature of the offence for which the rival is to be punished. Whereas the Danaides are said to be suffering for offending against the *numina Veneris* (79), his rival will be cast into Tartarus for violating *meos amores*, the poet's very own love. (*Cf.* A. Elter, 'Eine Elegie des Tibull (I,3), *RhM* 61, 1906, 267-82, p.279.)

24. Further, *illic sit quicumque* (81) at the end of the Tartarus section recalls the final couplet of the Elysium section, which began *illic est, cuicumque* (65).

(ii) I,10: The Mythic Past (7-10 and 19-24) Hades (35-8)

The two passages in I,10 dealing with the mythic past both occur in the opening 25 lines of the poem and will be treated first, before the Hades myth in 35-8 is examined. It will be shown that both passages in the opening lines are very closely connected with both the poet's situation as represented in I,10, and the various themes of the poem arising out of that situation.

The transition to a mythic past is first made in I,10 by *ll.*7 f. In *ll.*1-6 Tibullus protests about the invention of swords and the savage warfare it has caused (1-4), then, changing his tone, suggests that swords are only accidentally connected with warfare and are not its cause (5-6). In *ll.*7 f. he states plainly what *is* the true cause of wars:

> diuitis hoc uitium est auri, nec bella fuerunt,
> faginus astabat cum scyphus ante dapes.

It is gold; there were no wars when beechen (*sc.* rather than gold) cups stood before the banquet. This transitional couplet is constructed with remarkable skill. The two lines form a perfectly intelligible unit as they stand, yet at the same time the first clause, *diuitis ... auri*, by putting an end to the speculations of 1-6, connects with what precedes, while the second and third clauses, *nec ... dapes* connect with the lines that follow (8-12) in which the idea of a mythic past is developed.[25]

Tibullus' outline of the mythic past itself, occupying 7-12, is remarkably similar in technique to his description of the Golden Age in I,3,35-48. Once

---

25. Wimmel in his comments on this passage (*op.cit.* n.2) pp.127-9, rightly points out that *ferreus* in *l.*2 leads us to expect that the contrasting mythic past of 7 ff. will be depicted as a Golden Age. Yet gold, far from characterising the ideal past, is said to be the cause of Man's fall from grace; here wood (*cf.* the *faginus scyphus* of *l.*8) seems to be the material associated with the mythic past. In the light of all this, Wimmel suggests, convincingly in my opinion, that Tibullus has in mind here, not so much a Golden Age, as a Pastoral Age (*cf.* 9 f.) described by Varro (*RR* II,3-4).

again the ideal past is, for the most part, negatively characterised;[26] in 6 lines we get five negatives - *nec, non, non, nec, nec*. And again the same poetic purpose underlies this negative characterisation. By simply attaching a negative to them, the poet succeeds in projecting back into the ideal past those aspects of the present he deplores, aspects closely connected, as we shall see, with his own situation. The relevance of this passage dealing with the mythic past to his personal experience is thus guaranteed.

The present-day evil which Tibullus here asserts to have been absent from the ideal past, is warfare: *nec bella fuerunt* (7); *non arces, non uallus erat* (9); *tunc ... nec tristia nossem/arma nec audissem corde micante tubam* (11 f.). In this respect the mythic past contrasts strongly with the present era described in the lines leading up to the myth, in which the sword with its attendant evils *caedes* and *proelia* (3) reigns supreme. But the mythic section is also so constructed as to contrast with the poet's situation in that present era, outlined in the couplet (13 f.) immediately following the myth. The transition to this couplet is prepared by the final two lines of the mythic section. Up to this point the poet has nowhere come forward in *propria persona*, but has kept himself in the background. Now, in 11 f., he introduces himself into the myth.[27] Because he has represented the mythic past as free from war, he is able to say of himself:

> tunc mihi uita foret uulgi nec tristia nossem
> arma nec audissem corde micante tubam. (I,10,11 f.)

---

26. This is noted by W. Steidle, 'Das Motiv der Lebenswahl bei Tibull und Properz', *WS* LXXV, 1962, 100-40, p.103: 'Nach der Erkenntnis, dass vom Goldhunger die "Erfindung" des Krieges ausging (5-7), wird die von diesem Übel freie Vorzeit fast durchwegs mit Wendungen gestaltet, die negativ das Fehlen des Unheils herausstellen.' For the technique cp. above, pp.81 f. and n.7, and below, pp.106 f.

27. *Cf.* the similar introduction of himself into the myth of Elysium in I,3,57 f., and of his rival into the Tartarus myth in I,3,81 f.

And this couplet leads to the lines in which the poet, for the first time in this poem, tells us of his actual situation in the present:

> nunc ad bella trahor, et iam quis forsitan hostis
> haesura in nostro tela gerit latere. (I,10,13 f.)

The contrast the myth affords to the poet's case is obvious - especially in the light of the final two lines of the mythic section (11 f.). If he had lived in the ideal past (which the poet has mainly characterised as free of warfare in order to set up the contrast with his own case) he would not have known war's alarms; as it is he is dragged off to battle. The contrast is further strengthened by *tunc* (11) contasting with *nunc* (13) and *ad bella trahor* picking up *nec bella fuerunt* (7) at the start of the mythic section. Thus myth and personal experience are mutually adapted so as to set each other off exactly.

After *l.*14 Tibullus gives a new direction to the poem. Having revealed that he must go to war he now prays to his Lares to protect him in battle (*l.*15). Next he asks them not to be ashamed of the fact that they are wooden, pointing out that such was their condition in his grandfather's day.[28] The reason for his strange request is made apparent by the following couplet (19 f.) in which we find ourselves once more transported back into the mythic past:

> tunc[29] melius tenuere fidem, cum paupere cultu
> stabat in exigua ligneus aede deus. (I,10,19 f.)

The Lares should not be ashamed of their appearance since in the happy past when men kept faith, wooden

---

28. As Smith notes (*comm. ad loc.*), there seems to be no reason not to take *aui* in its literal sense of 'grandfather', rather than in the sense of 'ancestor'. Tibullus is thus, with one of those gradual transitions of which he is so fond, slowly leading us back into the past. He return first to his early youth (16), then to his grandfather's day (18), finally to the remote past (19 ff.).

29. Cp. *tunc*, *l.*11.

gods[30] were the norm.

The second section dealing with the mythic past (*ll.*19-24) falls into two parts (19 f. and 21-4). The opening couplet which sets the scene back in the distant past, is, as has just been shown, connected with what precedes by the somewhat artificially contrived link of the Lares' appearance. This couplet is, however, also connected with the lines that follow; the idea of simple rustic worship of a god, implicit in such phrases as *paupere cultu, exigua aede, ligneus deus,* is developed in 21-4. In these 4 lines the poet describes the humble offerings of grape and grain with which in earlier times the god was placated, and a miniature procession of thanksgiving for a prayer granted. The reason for this new characterisation of the mythic past in terms of simple rustic piety - and not, as in 7-12, in terms of the absence of warfare - becomes clear in the lines immediately following the myth.

Here Tibullus first repeats his prayer to the Lares (*l.*25; *cf. l.*15), next describes the simple offering[31] he will make and his little procession of thanksgiving. And then, because he has included the words *hic* (i.e. the god) *placatus erat* (21) in his depiction of offerings in the mythic past, he is now able, after describing the humble offering he will make, to say to the Lares, *sic placeam uobis* (29). Since his simple manner of sacrificing to the household gods is so close to the manner which pleased them in time past, he can be confident that his prayer, which promises a plain offering, will succeed. Clearly, the poet has here shaped the details of the myth and of his situation so that they dovetail perfectly. By associating rustic

---

30. 'Hardwood gods, like the beechen cups of 8, are conventionally associated with primeval simplicity' (Smith, *comm. ad loc.*). In both sections of I,10 dealing with the mythic past, wood, rather than any metal, is associated with the earlier time.

31. The lacuna after 25 might have contained further details about the *hostia* of 26 - or other plain offerings might have been specified therein.

simplicity of a very similar kind with the mythic past and with his own circumstances, he shows that his spiritual home lies in that past (*cf.* his wish to have lived then in 11 f.) and makes more effective his prayer in the present.

We come, finally, to the myth of Hades in *ll.*35-8. In the lines immediately preceding the introduction of the myth Tibullus allows the idea of war to lead into the idea of death, much as he had done in 1-4[32] (where *enses, caedes, proelia* gave way to *tum breuior dirae mortis operta uia est*). The two notions are consciously set side by side in the couplet:

> quis furor est atram bellis accersere Mortem?
> imminet et tacito clam uenit illa pede. (I,10,33 f.)

Then in the following line the myth of the underworld is introduced:

> non seges est infra, non uinea culta, sed audax
> Cerberus et Stygiae nauita turpis aquae:
> illic percussisque genis ustoque capillo
> errat ad obscuros pallida turba lacus. (I,10,35-8)

On a first examination it might well seem that the only link here between myth and context is the idea of death, and accordingly, that the picture of Hades drawn in these lines has no more than a decorative function.[33] Closer inspection, however, reveals that this is not the case.

In the first place, the details which lend definition to the picture of the underworld seem deliberately selected so as to evoke horror and fear. Thus Cerberus is said to be *audax*, Charon *turpis*, and a number of gruesome details are given in 37 f. By these means, by painting his version of the Hades myth in the darkest possible colours, the poet highlights the force of the rhetorical question in *l.*33. Since the afterlife is as

---

32. For the links between 33 f. and 1-4, see Wimmel (*op.cit.* n.2) p.138.

33. This is the only function that Wimmel, for example, allows to 33-8. He comments: 'Das Todesmotiv ist hier für Tibull in der Tat noch ein ausgesprochenes "Motiv". Es enthält wenig Eigenerfahrung und Eigenwissen ...' (*ibid.*, p.139).

grim as he has represented it to be, it is indeed a strange sort of madness to hasten one's descent thither through wars. Secondly, by employing the technique of negative characterisation, with which we are now familiar, the poet creates allusive links between the opening line of the myth and the surrounding context. Here it is something good - *non seges est infra, non uinea culta* - that is said to be absent from an evil place, rather than an evil said to be absent from a good time, as in 7-12 and I,3,35-48 (and, as we shall see, in II,3,70 and 73-6); and as the poet in these latter cases feels himself threatened by the evils he tells us were absent from the happy past, so here, by contrast, the goods he says are lacking in Hades are precisely those he associates with the peaceful rustic existence he would choose for himself. In *ll.*21 f., preceding the present passage, offerings of grapes and a wheaten crown, the produce of the *seges* and *uinea culta*, are associated with a time when men kept faith, a time in which the poet would wish to have lived, while in 45-9, following the myth, there is a similar association of agriculture and viticulture with a time the poet hopes for - when Pax will reign during his old age, to be spent amid surroundings of simple rusticity. Thus the negatively characterised details the poet includes in his version of Hades, strengthen and underline the contrast between the underworld, with its frightening associations of death, and the simple rustic life the poet says existed in the past and hopes will govern his old age.[34]

(iii) II,3: Apollo and Admetus (11-28) The Golden Age (69-76)

One of Tibullus' few uses of myth as exemplum is

---

34. This connexion between the myth and its context was observed already by Dissen. He comments on *non seges est infra, non uinea culta*: 'Nam has duas res composuit iam ante v.21.22. et componet iterum mox v.45 sqq.; inferorum autem locorum descriptio opponitur vitae rusticae suavitati.'

to be found in II,3.[35] In lines 11-28 of this elegy the poet tells the story of Apollo's service of Admetus. He offers no explicit reason for introducing the myth and the transition to it is, for Tibullus, quite abrupt. This has led at least one critic to condemn the passage as disruptive of the poem's unity;[36] but there is, on the contrary, a very close connexion between the myth and the poet's personal experience as outlined in the opening section of the elegy. What precisely this connexion is, will emerge from an examination first of 11-28 and then of the two couplets (29-32) immediately following the myth.

The myth of Apollo and Admetus[37] seems to me to be organised by the poet into five sections. First, the opening hexameter (11) gives us the whole situation dealt with by the exemplum in a nutshell: the handsome Apollo pastured the bulls of Admetus. Second, 12-14 explain *why* he had to do this. He was in love,[38] and

---

35. A good discussion of II,3 as a whole is to be found in W. Heilmann, *Die Bedeutung der Venus bei Tibull*, diss. Frankfurt 1959, pp.43-54 (*cf.* also p.70). See further my article 'The Unity of Tibullus 2.3' (forthcoming in *CQ* XXIX, 1979).

36. L. Pepe (*Tibullo Minore*, Naples 1948, p.19-21) notes that 'Lygdamus' III,4,67 ff. also has the myth of Apollo and Admetus. He judges that in Lygdamus' poem the myth is most effective, but '... in Tibullo il motivo mitologico, che è svolto con prolissità, consumata esperienza stilistica e raffinata tecnica di rielaborazione mitologica, non si fonde nello stato d'animo che il poeta tenta di esprimere, e rimane al di fuori, come elemento estraneo che turba, rompe, impedisce ogni possibilità di unità e coerenza fantastica ...'

37. My conclusions concerning the myth were reached quite independently of F.O. Copley ('*Servitium Amoris* in the Roman Elegists', *TAPhA* 78, 1947, 285-300) who deals fairly extensively with Tib.II, 3,11-28. I am glad to see our conclusions agree almost exactly.

38. This reason for Apollo's service of Admetus first occurs, so far as we know, in Callimachus *Hymn* II, 49 ff. (Then also in Rhianus - *cf.* fr.10 Powell, and Copley,p.286.) In earlier accounts of the myth Apollo is said to have undergone punishment for having killed the Cyclopes (or their sons); see W.H. Roscher, *Ausführliches Lexikon der Griechischen und Römischen Mythologie*, Leipzig 1884-90, *s.v.* 'Admetos'.

all his most famous divine attributes - his lyre-playing, his renowned untrimmed locks, and particularly his art of healing (the physician could not heal himself) - were useless either to win his beloved or to rid himself of his passion. Accordingly, the third section (14a-16) outlines what the god *did* do (since all his normal attributes and activities were useless): he drove cows to pasture, he made cheese. These lines may appear to constitute little more than a discursive development of the theme of Apollo's sojourn in the country, but in fact they serve to emphasize the menial level to which the god (note *ipse deus solitus*, 14a) was prepared to sink - for love.[39] The fourth and longest section (17-26), portrays with gentle yet effective humour the *effects* of Apollo's rustic toil. His sister was ashamed, the god's songs were interrupted by the cattle's lowing, petitioners at his oracles went away disappointed (no answer was forthcoming since the god was absent), Latona grieved to see her son's dishevelled hair, as did all who saw the god. (We should note the way in which the effects of Apollo's service are portrayed in terms of his best-known activities and attributes, namely his pastoral, musical and oracular functions, and his famous hair.) The fifth and final section of the exemplum consists of a brief summing up, in a single couplet, of what has gone before:

> Delos ubi nunc, Phoebe, tua est, ubi Delphica Pytho?
> nempe Amor in parua te iubet esse casa. (II,3,27 f.)

The chief point of the myth, then, as it is presented by Tibullus, is that Apollo undertook rustic labour for love of Admetus since only rustic labour was of any use in his case. This point is given prominence by the contrast, repeatedly underlined in various ways by 11-28, between the god's famous divine attributes - his beautiful untrimmed hair (12;23-5), his musical accomplishments (12;19 f.), his art of healing (13 f.), his oracles (21 f.), his splendid shrines at Delos and Delphi (27) - and his present straitened circumstances

---

39. *Cf.* Copley, p.292.

brought about by love. In the face of love all these attributes meant nothing; in order to win his beloved the god had to undertake rustic labour like the most menial of mortals and live in a humble cottage - that was the only way.

The two important ways in which Tibullus diverges from his Callimachean original in presenting this version of the myth should be noted, since it is precisely in these divergences that the significance of the exemplum resides. First, whereas Callimachus merely states that Apollo served as Admetus' herdsman out of love for him (ἠιθέου ὑπ' ἔρωτι κεκαυμένος Ἀδμήτοιο, *Hymn* II, 49) Tibullus indicates that the god's love *compelled* him to serve the king, all other expedients having failed (11-14). Second, in Callimachus the story of Apollo's service, occuring as it does in a hymnic context, is used to glorify the god, to show his divine power as Νόμιος;[40] in Tibullus, by contrast, Apollo's service is represented not as glorious, but as something servile and shameful (cp. *ipse deus solitus*, 14a, and the embarrassed and sorrowful reactions of the god's mother and sister to his herding in 17 f. and 23 ff.). By diverging in these ways from Callimachus, the poet succeeds in giving to his version of the myth a new, specifically Roman elegiac, meaning. What he does is to subsume Apollo's amorous activity under the familiar elegiac concept of *seruitium amoris*. Apollo is represented as one who places the highest value on love: his rustic labour thus becomes something he, like the elegiac lover at Rome, is forced to undertake when all other approaches to the beloved and attempts to rid himself of his love have failed. And this *seruitium amoris*, although freely undertaken, is represented by the poet to be as shameful for the god as it would be for the freeborn elegiac lover.

If we turn back now to the poet's outline of his situation in the opening section (*ll.*1-10) of II,3, we cannot fail to observe the relevance of the myth to his

---

40. *Cf.* Copley, p.287.

personal experience. Lines 1-2 sketch the situation to which, as we shall see, the poet later returns in *ll.*61 ff. In the opening couplet of the poem, Tibullus establishes a contrast between countryside and city; he would have it that, because his girl is in the country, the city-dweller is *ferreus*, insensitive in matters of love. The thought of these two lines is carried a stage further by the couplet that follows, in which the spheres of love and of the countryside are brought into still closer conjunction. Venus and Amor, it would appear, have abandoned the city in order to become rustics; the country has now become the only possible setting for love. Accordingly, in 5-10, Tibullus transports himself (in imagination) from city to country and adopts the lot of a rustic labourer. What he envisages for himself is *seruitium amoris* in a rustic context, and that means tilling the soil and following the plough. It is important to note that the life of the country is by no means idealised in these lines; the characteristic attributes of the elegiac lover suffer under the unaccustomed hardships to which they are exposed (9 f.).[41] And it is precisely because the agricultural life is as hard as he represents it to be, that the poet makes his adoption of such a life conditional. Rustic *seruitium* is to be undertaken, not for its own sake, but in order that he might be admitted to his mistress' presence (*cum aspicerem dominam*, 5).

The connexion between Tibullus' version of the myth of Apollo and Admetus, and this situation of the poet should by now be clear. The god, like the poet, freely

---

41. Smith's comment on these lines shows that they emphasize in addition the baseness of the toil, the *seruitium*, chosen for himself by the poet: 'The ideal lover of the elegy is not endowed with an especially strong physique, partly, no doubt, because great bodily strength or rude health is suggestive of those who have to work for a living and are therefore no better than slaves, cp. Ovid, *Trist.*1,5,72, "invalidae vires ingenuaeque mihi"; Martial, 3,46,6, "invalidum est nobis ingenuumque latus".' *Cf.* also H. Krefeld, *Liebe, Landleben und Krieg bei Tibull*, diss. Marburg 1952, published Dusseldorf 1954, p.12.

undergoes *seruitium amoris*, also in a rural setting, doing, for the sake of a beloved, menial work he would never undertake for its own sake. Further, in the case of Apollo, those attributes which distinguish him as a god and not a mortal, are nullified by his rustic labour, just as, in the poet's case, those very things (*graciles artus, teneras manus*, 9 f.) which argue him to be an elegiac lover and not a slave, are the most affected by his *seruitium*. The exemplum thus turns out to be one of a kind often found in ancient poetry, by means of which men justify their conduct by reference to the conduct of the gods.[42] In the present instance, the fact that one of the greatest of the gods could undergo *seruitium amoris* of exactly the same kind as Tibullus envisages for himself, and with similar results, is a powerful justification of the poet's proposed course of action.

The four lines following the myth provide, in my opinion, strong support for the interpretation I have placed upon the exemplum and its relationship to the poet's experience. Lines 29 f. make explicit what was only implied by Tibullus in the myth, that Apollo's service of Admetus was shameful but that it was freely undergone as *seruitium amoris*. *Veneri seruire* here confirms that *seruitium amoris* was indeed what Apollo underwent, while *puduisse* shows that *seruitium* of this sort was generally held to be shameful (even though the god did not think it so). The next two lines, 31 f., are closely connected with the immediately preceding couplet and cannot be interpreted apart from it. I take the meaning, which is highly compressed by the poet, of the four lines together to be as follows:[43]

---

42. For just a few examples see Ter. *Eun*. 584-91; Cat. LXVIII, 138-40; Prop.II,30B,31 f.; *A.P.*V, 100.

43. As regards 31 f. in particular, I concur with the interpretation of W. Kraus advanced in 'Der Gott der Liebenden', *WS* 79, 1966, 399-405. A number of the points made by him are anticipated in the brief articles by W.S. Macguiness (*CQ* 38, 1944, 31-2) and H.J. Rose (*CQ* 38, 1944, 78), which are not mentioned by Kraus.

'Men were happy once when they had before them the example of gods who loved openly, without shame. Nowadays a god of that sort is no longer believed in;[44] but he who loves his girl prefers that the god should not be believed in (*sc.* by others - the lover himself believes in the god) rather than that the god should be thought not to be amorous (*sc.* and be generally believed in).' Tibullus is here protesting against the rationalism of the present day, which will not give credence to the sort of story he has just related involving a god who loved. The poet, however, clearly regards himself as one *cui sua cura puella est* (31); against the tendency of the present day he and other true lovers, like the *felices* of old, *do* believe in a god who undertook *seruitium amoris* and, like the *felices*, still take such a god for their model. Thus the justification of the poet's proposed method of approach to his mistress implied by the myth of Apollo's rustic *seruitium amoris*, although qualified by modern disbelief, is nevertheless vindicated by reference to the belief of true lovers.

Before the significance of the final mythic passage to be analysed (*ll.*67-76) can be grasped, the movement of the poem between *ll.*33 and 66 must be summarised. In 33-49 the poet comes to a new understanding of his situation: he now realises that, whereas in former times love was the primary value and the beloved could be won by *seruitium*, in the present Iron Age (*ferrea saecula*, 35, as opposed to the Golden Age hinted at in *felices olim*, 29) wealth is chiefly valued, it is wealth that girls rejoice in. Accordingly, in 50-8, the poet demands wealth if that is the only way his Nemesis may be won; he has by this time abandoned his former notion that she could be won by rustic *seruitium*. Now we saw earlier at the start of the elegy that Tibullus by no means idealised the life of the countryside (5-10); he

---

44. *fabula* here is taken to bear the meaning 'an idle tale', 'something no longer believed in' (as in Horace *Odes* I,4,16 and Prop.III,5,45) rather than 'byword', 'laughing-stock' (as in Tib.I,4,83 and Ovid *Am.*III,1,21).

knew he would be burned and blistered by his agricultural labour. The countryside was therefore to be tolerated only upon a condition - that he might be admitted to his mistress' presence. But *ll.*49-58 have shown that this condition could never have been fulfilled: the proper setting for his mistress is seen to be the city (51), and admittance to her, the poet now realises, is won not by rustic *seruitium* but by expensive gifts. Accordingly the thought of 61-7 follows on with perfect consistency. Tibullus here rounds upon the countryside - now intolerable for the reasons just outlined - and curses it, praying that nothing may grow from the cornfield. The relationship of country to city established in the opening couplet of the poem -

> Rura meam, Cornute, tenent uillaeque puellam:
> ferreus est, heu heu, quisquis in urbe manet. (II,3,1 f.)

- is inverted by the words *dura seges, Nemesim quae abducis ab urbe* (61). In the two couplets that follow Tibullus widens the arc of his fire to take in the produce not only of the tilth but also of Bacchus. The derogatory tone of *dura seges* is continued by *deuotos lacus* (64) and *tristibus agris* (65). And again a contrast suggests itself between the poet's present sentiments and those he expressed at the start of the poem. The mood of *haud impune licet formosas tristibus agris/abdere* (65 f.) is very far from that of *ipsa Venus latos iam nunc migrauit in agros* (3). Finally *l.*67, *o ualeant fruges, ne sint modo rure puellae*, sums up the poet's new hostile attitude to the land, expressed in the preceding lines. He concludes here that the produce of the soil is somehow *responsible* for girls' going into the country - and accordingly rejects it.[45]

In the lines that follow Tibullus takes us back once more to the realm of myth, to that Golden Age of

---

45. The thought of *l.*67 (as of 29-32) is highly compressed. The poet would appear to be reasoning along the following lines: the country is farmed for produce - rich men own farms - girls go off there with them - *ergo* if there were no produce girls would not go into the country.

love which was earlier viewed in terms of Apollo's service of Admetus (the presence of mortals was only incidentally touched on by *felices* in *l*.29). Now, the mythic past is viewed from the standpoint of the men, the *felices* (the *ueteres* of *l*.69) of that time. What Tibullus does here is to offer, in terms of the myth, a reason for their happiness in rustic love which is, at the same time, an explanation of the divorce between love and the countryside in the present Iron Age. In the couplet -

> o ualeant fruges, ne sint modo rure puellae:
> glans alat et prisco more bibantur aquae. (II,3,67 f.)

- the pentameter, *l*.68, picking up the idea of *fruges* in the hexameter, suggests a return to those times when there was no produce, when men were nourished by acorns and water, rather than by the grape and grain (*cf*. 61 f. and 63-6) of the present day. Next comes a couplet of central importance to this mythic section. The hexameter, *glans aluit ueteres, et passim semper amarunt* (69), by creating a quasi-causal connexion between the fact that Golden Age men ate acorns (i.e. they did not till the soil for food) and the fact that they loved at large, provides a reason, albeit a somewhat strange one, for their success in love. At the same time this line picks up and develops the thought of *ll*.61-7. There the poet established a close link between the idea that the countryside was cultivated for produce and the idea that it was an unsuitable place for beautiful girls. Now he indicates that the men of former times did cultivate the soil for produce - and they loved indiscriminately. The implication, clearly, is that it is *the practice of agriculture*, unknown in the Golden Age, that has ruined the countryside as a

setting for love in the present day,[46] making it an unsuitable place for girls to be. This implication is strengthened by the pentameter (70), where *sulcos satos* confirms that it is specifically agriculture that Tibullus has in mind. The answer to the question posed here is that it harmed Golden Age men not at all - they loved where they would - it is rather we in the Iron Age who suffer for ploughing the fields. Lines 71 f. then enlarge on the thought of *passim semper amarunt*: in a countryside not yet ravaged by agriculture:

> ...quibus aspirabat Amor, praebebat aperte
> mitis in umbrosa gaudia ualle Venus. (II,3,71 f.)

aperte here at the end of 71, echoes *aperte* at the end of 29; the fact that love was then a free open activity is made a distinguishing feature of the Golden Age in both places.

After *l*.72 Tibullus continues to develop his highly individual version of the Golden Age myth. But he now leaves behind the theme of Love and the Countryside to take up topics closely connected, as we shall shortly see, with his personal experience. In *ll*.73 ff. he interprets the fact that Amor and Venus operated openly, at large, in a new sense; they could work openly, he says, because there were no barriers between lover and beloved: *nullus erat custos, nulla exclusura dolentes/ianua*. Here, as elsewhere in his descriptions of a mythic past, Tibullus projects back into that past present-day evils which affect him,

---

46. In retrospect we can see an important difference between the poet's and Apollo's rustic *seruitium amoris* as represented in the first half of the elegy. The poet's *seruitium*, we now realise, was self-defeating; the activities he envisaged for himself were all connected with the cultivation of the soil - but it was precisely this practice that made the country an unsuitable place for love. Apollo's *seruitium* was (we presume) successful, since the tasks he undertook were exclusively pastoral and therefore appropriate in a non-agricultural Golden Age of Love.

simply by attaching a negative to them.[47] The contrast thus afforded with his personal experience is brought out by lines 77 f., where the poet returns from the Golden Age to his present situation.[48] He now deplores positively those details he presented in negative form within the myth, complaining that every approach to his mistress is barred. Myth and personal experience are here reciprocally adapted so as to set each other off exactly: *clausa mea est* contrasts with *nulla exclusura dolentes ianua; copia rara uidendi* with *nullus erat custos;* and *laxam togam* with the thought (whatever its precise formulation may have been) expressed by *uillosa ueste*. The full contrast between the happy mythic past when agriculture was not practised and love was free, when there were no barriers between lover and beloved, and the miserable present when the countryside has been ruined as an arena for love by the practice of tilling the soil, and the poet is barred from his beloved, is now complete.*

---

47. Besides *nullus* and *nulla* in 73 there was perhaps a third negative in the missing *l*.75. (For the technique, see above, pp.81 f. and 92 f.).

48. The contrast between mythic past and real present is, as often in Tibullus, marked by temporal adverbs. *nunc* in 77 picks up *tunc* in 71 (cp. *olim/nunc*, 29 and 31; *nunc, nunc, nunc* in I,3,49 f.; *tunc/nunc* in I,10,11 and 13).

* Additional Note to Chapter 3 : This thesis was already virtually complete when David F. Bright's recent book, *Haec Mihi Fingebam, Tibullus in his World*, Leiden 1978, came into my hands. Bright has quite a lot to say about Tibullus' relationship to the world of myth. Like me he also comments on the poet's very restricted use of heroic exempla in the manner of Propertius and Ovid; but he then adopts a standpoint very different from mine: 'Tibullus has used [exempla] sparingly, not because he had no need of myths but because he has used his own situation as the central mythological act of his poetry.' (p.12) Bright's purpose is to demonstrate how Tibullus, instead of making reference to myth, has used his own experiences as exempla. (p.12) He proposes to examine 'three general methods by which Tibullus presents his own persona and the other characters in his elegies ... The first is the substitution of the poet for the myth itself, as in I,3.' The second method consists of placing accounts of a real character and of a myth side by side, as in I,7 and II,5 'leaving the application

of the myth to the reader's intelligence and perception ... The third approach is the poet's treatment of himself and those he loves in the three series of erotic poems. There ... the world of Tibullus and Delia becomes the model which is reflected in Tibullus - Nemesis and Tibullus - Marathus.' (pp.14 f.)

Bright's chief thesis then is an interesting one; but his book (which consists mainly of long analyses of the individual elegies) is unfortunately written in a diffuse and discursive manner which makes it very difficult to say whether or not the author has proved his main contention. The idea that Tibullus' own situation is 'mythologized' by the poet, contains, in my view, only a modicum of truth. I should say it is rather the world of pious rustic simplicity and tranquillity - particularly as represented by the Golden Age - that in Tibullus' poetry takes the place of the world of heroic myth as conceived by the other elegists. In any case Bright's conception of myth is very much wider than my own. And while he has interesting things to say about some of the specific passages with which I deal, I do not feel the need to modify my conclusions in the light of his book.

Chapter 4

PROPERTIUS

Propertius must be the focal point of any examination of myth in Roman elegy. Not only does he use more mythology than either Tibullus or Ovid, but he also makes the most varied and creative use of this poetic material. Mythology in fact constitutes one of Propertius' most important poetic resources, being employed by him for a large number of different purposes. In his elegies we find mythology used in the form of brief allusions, of extended narrative, of proverb, of exempla used to contrast, compare, idealize, exhort, warn and so on.[1]

It is not surprising then that his use of myth has been more closely studied than that of the other elegists.[2] No fewer than three theses have been written on the subject. The earliest of these, by A. Otto,[3] is the least interesting for my purpose, consisting chiefly of a rather dry enumeration of the possible sources of the mythology in Propertius. The second, by W. Schöne,[4] is somewhat slight and skims fairly quickly over the matter that it deals with; but it contains some sound judgments which will be referred to as the occasion arises. Finally, there is the work

---

1. Exhaustive catalogues of the uses to which Propertius puts myth may be found in the dissertations (see below nn.4 and 5) of Schöne, pp.7-10, and Kölmel, pp.61-3 and 89 f.

2. A useful historical survey of all the various critical views on Propertius' mythology is made by G. Lieberg, 'Die Mythologie des Properz in der Forschung und die Idealisierung Cynthias', *RhM* 112, 1969, 311-47. The best appreciation of Propertius' use of mythology, full of valuable insights, is A.W. Allen's essay 'Sunt Qui Propertium Malint' (in *Critical Essays, Elegy and Lyric*, ed. Sullivan, London 1962, 107-48) particularly pp.129-46. Of the commentators, Rothstein and Enk are the most useful on the poet's use of myth.

3. A. Otto, *De Fabulis Propertianis*, Part I, Breslau 1880, Part II, Gross-Glogau 1886. (I have seen only Part I.)

4. W. Schöne, *De Propertii Ratione Fabulas Adhibendi*, diss. Leipzig 1911.

of B. Kölmel,[5] by far the most thorough and illuminating of the three theses. Kölmel deals chiefly with the *theory* underlying Propertius' use of myth, discovering in the poet a belief in a mythic Age of Beauty (*formosi temporis aetas*, I,4,7) when lovers were true, an age which contrasts strongly with the present one in which the poet must live and write. He also shows the way in which Propertius idealizes his Cynthia through the medium of mythology, transforming her almost into a figure of myth herself.[6]

These conclusions of Kölmel's seem to me to be, in the main, both true and valuable. My intention, therefore, in this chapter, is not simply to endorse, but to add to, the findings of Kölmel. He, as I have mentioned, is concerned chiefly with the theoretical framework within which Propertius employs myth:[7] I shall deal, for the most part, with the poet's practice. What I wish to demonstrate is how Propertius, in using mythological exempla to illustrate personal experience, establishes very close connexions between myth and the context in which it occurs; how he frequently makes these connexions the stronger by mutually fashioning *illustrans* and *illustrandum* so that they dovetail perfectly, and by building in verbal echoes between them (in this respect he follows closely the techniques of the Alexandrian poets discussed in Chapter I); how he sometimes uses myth actually to extend, and to make transitions in, the thought of particular elegies.

---

5. B.W. Kölmel, *Die Funktion des Mythologischen in der Dichtung des Properz*, diss. Heidelberg 1957.

6. See Kölmel, *ibid.*, the whole of Section II, but in particular Chapter II.

7. See Kölmel, *ibid.*, pp.1 f., where the author states that his aim is '... ein Gesamtbild zu gewinnen und anstelle von rationalistischer Einzelinterpretation der Exempla das Panorama der mythologischen Welt zu setzen, wie sie bei Properz ihre besondere Ausprägung erfahren hat.' Kölmel does, of course, also have something to say about Propertius' *manner* of introducing myth into individual poems, and I shall have a number of occasions to refer to his thesis in what follows.

It has been well said by Margaret Hubbard, in connexion with Propertius' use of myth, that

> '... one real difficulty in interpreting him is to determine on each occasion whether it matters that *this* mythological analogy is used, so that the poem is genuinely allusive and dependent on something outside itself for its understanding, or whether we are instantly told all that we need to know.'[8]

In the present chapter I have tried to solve this difficulty in advance by dividing the mythological exempla to be handled, into three categories: (i) Allusive Exempla. In these cases, in order that they may fully appreciate the effect he is trying to create, Propertius requires of his readers some knowledge of the mythological characters involved and of their background. (ii) Shaped Exempla. Here the poet by careful wording or selection of detail so shapes his mythological references that they immediately suggest to the attentive reader how he is to interpret them. (iii) Mixed Exempla. Under this heading I shall discuss exempla which belong no more to one of the above categories than to the other, but combine the functions of both.

The categories just described should not, of course, be regarded as watertight; a certain amount of seepage from one to another will inevitably be observed.[9] What they are intended to be is merely a convenient framework, within which the aims outlined in the preceding paragraph may be realised.

(i) Allusive Exempla

We may begin with some fairly straightforward uses

---

8. Margaret Hubbard, *Propertius*, London 1974, p.17.

9. The difficulty of categorising Propertius' many and varied uses of myth is noted by A. La Penna in the more recent of his two books on the poet. He states his belief '... che in massima parte la mitologia di Properzio sia ben fusa coi vari toni dell' elegia, compresi quelli ironici e quasi comici: perciò riesce difficile fissare le varie funzioni in schemi utili e adeguati.' (*L'Integrazione Difficile, un Profilo di Properzio*, Turin 1977, p.196)

of exempla, in Propertius II,20. The poem opens:

> Quid fles abducta grauius Briseide? quid fles
> anxia captiua tristius Andromacha?
> quidue mea de fraude deos, insana, fatigas?
> quid quereris nostram sic cecidisse fidem?
> non tam nocturna uolucris funesta querela
> Attica Cecropiis obstrepit in foliis,
> nec tantum Niobe, bis sex ad busta superba,
> sollicito lacrimans defluit a Sipylo. (II,20,1-8)

Here the poet does not supply every detail necessary for the full appreciation of the mythological parallels. In order to understand fully the force of the parallels we need to know that Briseis and Andromache were both women who, though separated from the men they loved through no fault of their own, remained faithful to their partners. This is just the role in which the poet's mistress represents herself here, the role of injured innocence; though estranged from her beloved by his alleged infidelity she remains faithful. I do not think it is reading too much into the exempla also to see a parallel between the partners of the two heroines, and the poet. Neither Achilles nor Hector was unfaithful to Briseis or Andromache respectively: nor (by implication) has the poet been unfaithful to his mistress.

All this, as has been indicated, must be inferred from what we know of the mythological characters concerned, and of their background. The explicit point of comparison is simply that the poet's girl, like Briseis and Andromache wept bitterly.[10] In the two exempla that follow (*ll.*5-8) it is only this straightforward point that is at issue. With a climactic effect, Propertius introduces even more powerful examples of grief, namely Philomela and Niobe. These mythological illustrations lack the complexity of the earlier pair. All the poet requires of us here, is

---

10. Enk, *comm. ad loc.*, gives sources in Greek literature for the grief of Briseis and Andromache. A possible source for the tears of Briseis, not noticed by the commentators, is a Pompeian wallpainting from the House of the Tragic Poet (reproductions in G. Rizzo, *La Pittura Ellenistico-Romana*, Milan 1929, plate LXII; and in G. Charbonneaux *et al.*, *Hellenistic Art*, New York 1973, plate 123) in which we see Briseis being led away, weeping, from Achilles.

that we know that the grief of Niobe and Philomela was proverbial.[11] Myth is again used in a similar uncomplicated fashion, in *ll.*9-12 and 29-32, where we need know only that Danae's prison was proverbially impregnable and that the torments of the underworld were proverbially harsh.

Much more subtle are the two highly artistic exempla-series in I,3 and II,14 which we shall look at next. The two series are similar in many respects; both stand at the head of the elegies in which they occur, both are of some length, both are very closely tied to their context by means of repeated correlatives (or quasi-correlatives in the case of II,14). And of most interest for our purposes, both sets of exempla, besides being explicitly linked to their immediate context also connect with the whole of their respective elegies in implicit allusive ways.

The third elegy of Propertius' first book has been more discussed than perhaps any other poem by him,[12] and not without reason, since it is without doubt one of his finest elegies. The stately opening verses have been especially admired:

> Qualis Thesea iacuit cedente carina
> languida desertis Cnosia litoribus;
> qualis et accubuit primo Cepheia somno
> libera iam duris cotibus Andromede;

---

11. See R. Öhler, *Mythologische Exempla in der Älteren Griechischen Dichtung*, Aarau 1925, Part IIIA, for Niobe and Philomela as proverbial patterns of sorrow.

12. See *Bibliography* for references. Most of the relevant literature is conveniently listed at the start of the article by A. Wlosok, 'Die Dritte Cynthia-Elegie des Properz', *Hermes* 95, 1967, 330-52. The best general treatments of this elegy are, in my opinion, those of E. Fraenkel, 'Die Klassische Dichtung der Römer' (in *Das Problem des Klassischen und die Antike*, ed. W. Jaeger, Stuttgart 1933, 53-6); E. Reitzenstein, *Wirklichkeitsbild und Gefühlsentwicklung bei Properz*, Leipzig 1936, pp.42-6; J.-P. Boucher, *Etudes sur Properce*, Paris 1965, pp.53-5; and F. Klingner, *Properzens Elegie Qualis Thesea*, Passau n.d.

nec minus assiduis Edonis fessa choreis
qualis in herboso concidit Apidano:
talis uisa mihi mollem spirare quietem
Cynthia non certis nixa caput manibus. (I,3,1-8)

We notice immediately the strong syntactical connexion between mythological illustration and point illustrated: *qualis ... qualis ... qualis ...* in the exempla, followed by *talis* in the couplet following the series. In this way the poet stresses the explicit point of comparison between the heroines and Cynthia, which is a twofold one. First, Cynthia, like Ariadne, Andromede and the Bacchante, lay overcome by sleep; second, she appeared to him to be as lovely as these heroines.[13] However, when we have noted this, we have by no means exhausted the significance of the exempla-series. Further implications, suggested by the mythological characters and their circumstances, remain to be examined.

To begin with, each of the opening three couplets of the poem seems to be filled with a slightly different emotional content. Hertzberg's comment on this is hard to improve upon:

> Non κλίμακα mutatis similibus continent, sed variis visionibus dormientis Cynthiae imaginem ab omni parte illustrant. Solitudinem enim Ariadna significat, - optatam diu quietem Andromeda, profundum somnum Baccha toto corpore resoluta.[14]

---

13. In most comparisons of Cynthia with heroines we may, I think, take it for granted that the heroines are thought to be beautiful and that Cynthia is assumed to be as beautiful, if not more beautiful, than they. This is sometimes made quite explicit by the poet: see I,4,5-8; II,2,3-14; II,3,25-40; II,28,27-30; and Kölmel (*diss.cit.* n.5) pp.64 ff.

14. Herzberg, *comm. ad loc.* A similar observation had already been made by the German poet and translator of Propertius, Knebel, in the notes to his translation: 'Er mahlt ... in ganzen Bildern, in bereits bekannten Gemählden, und jeder Zug dieser Gemählde drückt eine besondere Eigenschaft des Gegenstandes aus, den er darstellen will. So sind hier Verlassenheit, matter Gram und blühende Schönheit im Schlafe, in drey besonderen Gemählden ausgedrückt.' (Quoted by G. Herwig-Hager, 'Goethes Properz-Begegnung, "Der Besuch" und Properz I,3', in *Festschrift Schadewaldt*, Pfullingen 1965, p.437.)

Each of the mythic illustrations exemplifies sleep, but because all the heroines have their own independent history, summarised by the poet in each of the three couplets, the effect of the separate illustrations is, and must be, subtly different. Ariadne lies *languida desertis litoribus*, Andromeda sleeps *libera iam duris cotibus*, the Bacchante has collapsed *assiduis fessa choreis*. Propertius here exploits the different circumstances of the three mythological figures to attain a variety of emotional effects.

But there is another, allusive, aspect of the exempla-series to be considered. It seems certain that in composing 1-6 (and indeed much of this elegy, as we shall see), Propertius had before his imagination works of the visual arts. The situation of the Ariadne-exemplum is mirrored by a painting described by Pausanias (I,20,2) in which were to be seen Ἀριάδνη καθεύδουσα καὶ Θησεὺς ἀναγόμενος καὶ Διόνυσος ἥκων ἐς τὴν Ἀριάδνης τὴν ἁρπαγήν.[15] A Pompeian wall-painting in the House of the Tragic Poet,[16] in which Ariadne lies alone, while Theseus is helped on board ship by his companions, could also serve as an illustration of this exemplum. And then there is the sculpted Vatican Ariadne, the heroine asleep, of which Birt made so much.[17] There is no known representation of Andromede asleep, but Propertius may have had in mind a painting since lost. In the case of the last exemplum, that of the unconscious Bacchante,

---

15. Noted by Rothstein *ad loc*. A relief of the Hadrianic period (in the Vatican Museum; illustrated in Rizzo (*op.cit.* n.10) plate XXXVIII) reflects this composition exactly. On our left, Ariadne asleep - exemplifying the phrase *non certis nixa caput manibus* (*l*.8) applied to Cynthia - with a figure just arrived behind her; on the right, Theseus stealthily boarding his ship.

16. Rizzo, plate XXXIX.

17. Th. Birt, 'Die vaticanische Ariadne und die dritte Elegie des Properz', *RhM* 50, 1895, 31-65 and 161-90. There is no doubt that Birt's claim that I,3 is a sort of commentary on this sculpture is exaggerated; but his article is nevertheless important, since it represents one of the earliest attempts to relate Propertius' poetry to the visual arts.

we know of a whole series of Campanian wall-paintings showing a female figure (a bacchante or a nymph) being approached or surprised in sleep by a male (a satyr, a pan, or a priapus).[18] The painting, however, which comes closest to Propertius, depicts exactly the situation of *ll.*5 f.; a Bacchante (we know her to be such from her *tympanum* and *thyrsus*) lies utterly exhausted by the side of a stream, while from behind and above, a satyr approaches.[19]

All the paintings mentioned in the preceding paragraph seem to have been well-known types, which the poet could have expected to be present to his audience's mind as they heard the first eight lines of I,3. That Propertius did have such expectations would seem to be proved by the lines which follow (9 ff.) in which he exploits the pictorial associations aroused by the exempla. In the pictures both of the sleeping Ariadne and of the exhausted Bacchante, a male figure approaches the sleeper. So now, in *ll.*9 f., the poet surrounded by link-boys, like Bacchus ringed round by his *thiasos*, comes upon the sleeping Cynthia; and in ll ff. he has thoughts of taking her by force, as the satyr to be seen in a Herculanean wall-painting takes a Bacchante he has awoken.[20] Once more then, we find Propertius taking advantage of the complexity of his mythological exempla. By casting them in a form which would immediately call to his audience's mind certain well-known paintings, he is able to move on to a new theme - his own drunken amorous approach to his mistress - simply by drawing that audience's attention to a further detail of the

---

18. See W. Helbig, *Untersuchungen über die Campanische Wandmalerei*, Leipzig 1873, Section XIV.

19. From Pompeii, House of the Citharist, now in the National Museum, Naples; reproductions in Hubbard (*op.cit.* n.8) frontispiece, and Rizzo, plate CXII.

20. Now in the National Museum, Naples; Rizzo, plate CXIII. This painting represents the next stage after the type of scene depicted in plate CXII. The female figure is again identifiable as a Bacchante, by *thyrsus* and *tympanum*.

pictures he has evoked.[21]

Propertius' imagination continues to operate in strongly visual terms as the elegy proceeds. The couplet -

> sed sic intentis haerebam fixus ocellis,
> Argus ut ignotis cornibus Inachidos. (I,3,19 f.)

- calls to mind paintings of Argus staring in astonishment at Io whom he is guarding.[22] Just so the poet stood wondering at his Cynthia. Here, the exemplum although enhanced by these pictorial associations, has but a simple function, to illustrate the thought of *l*.19. Propertius does not go on to draw out further implications of the myth.

The section of the poem from 21-34, in which Propertius tells how he presented Cynthia with gifts and feared lest she be troubled by nightmares, contains no references to mythology. Then, in *ll*.35-46, the poet represents his mistress, now very much awake, addressing him. Her speech falls into two sections, each of six lines. In the first section (35-40) she reproaches Propertius bitterly for his infidelity, but in the second (41-6) her tone becomes softer, and she speaks more in sorrow than in anger.[23] It is striking that,

---

21. Elegy II,26A,17 f. affords a good parallel to this procedure. Because, in the earlier part of the poem, the poet has called to mind paintings of Helle drowning, he is now able, without further ado, to refer to a dolphin, such as often appeared in paintings of this type. See K. Keyssner, 'Die Bildende Kunst bei Properz', in *Wege der Forschung*, vol. CCXXXVII, Darmstadt 1975, p.279; also Hubbard, *op.cit.*, pp.167 f.

22. Reproductions in Rizzo, plates XLII (painting in Pompeii, *macellum*) and XLIII (painting in House of Livia, Palatine). In the former picture especially, Argus' expression betokens amazement. The apparent incongruity of Propertius' implied comparison of Cynthia with a horned maiden, disappears when we realise that the poet has paintings in mind. In both the pictures referred to above, Io is a beautiful young woman with only token horns peeping out from her hair.

23. The variation in tone in this speech (and in the elegy as a whole) is delicately analysed by E. Reitzenstein (*op.cit.* n.12) pp.42-6.

as this change of tone occurs, allusions to myth once more begin to appear and Cynthia seems to approach the ideal vision the poet had of her at the start of the poem. For a brief moment in *l*.41 *nam modo purpureo fallebam stamine somnum*, she reminds us of a chaste Penelope or Lucretia; but it is the image of of Ariadne which opened the elegy, that dominates its close. First, when Cynthia says, *interdum leuiter mecum deserta querebar* (*l*.43) this suggests that the poet is again comparing her with Ariadne as he did at the start; only now it is Ariadne's desertion by her lover as well as her lying in sleep that is in point. This suggestion is strengthened by the echo of *desertis* (*l*.2) in *deserta* (*l*.43).[24] And it is confirmed by the final hexameter of the poem: *dum me iucundis lapsam Sopor*[25] *impulit alis.* Propertius' visual imagination dominates right to the end; he now pictures Cynthia lying fanned by the wings of Sopor, the Roman personification of sleep, just as we see Ariadne asleep on the knees of a winged figure, Hypnos, in certain wall-paintings from Pompeii.[26] Thus, by a species of ring-composition, Propertius ends the poem as he began it, with a vision of the sleeping Ariadne.

Elegy II,14 begins, like I,3, with an impressive exempla-series:

> Non ita Dardanio gauisus Atrida triumpho est,
> cum caderent magnae Laomedontis opes;
> nec sic errore exacto laetatus Vlixes,
> cum tetigit carae litora Dulichiae;

---

24. We should also note the other verbal echoes of the exempla here: *somnum* (41) picks up *somno* (3), while *fessa* (42) echoes *fessa* (5). These connexions are all pointed out by L. Curran, 'Vision and Reality in Propertius I,3', *YClS* 19, 1966, 189-207, pp.205 f.

25. I agree with Birt (*art.cit.* n.17) p.48, that *Sopor* should be read rather than *sopor*. The reason should be clear from what follows in my text.

26. Reproductions in Rizzo, plate CIX. This plate shows two paintings, one from the House of Meleager, the other from the House of the Coloured Capitals; both now in the National Museum, Naples.

nec sic Electra, saluum cum aspexit Oresten,
  cuius falsa tenens fleuerat ossa soror;
nec sic incolumem Minois Thesea uidit,
  Daedalium lino cum duce rexit iter;
quanta ego praeterita collegi gaudia nocte:
  immortalis ero, si altera talis erit. (II,14,1-10)

The formal threefold repetition of *nec sic*, (after *non ita* in *l*.1) culminating in *quanta* (*l*.9), calls attention to the explicit purpose of the exempla-series,[27] which is to illustrate the extent of the poet's joy in a night of love with his mistress: Agamemnon, Odysseus, Electra and Ariadne did not rejoice so much in their various circumstances as Propertius did in the previous night. If this were the sole function of the exempla in 1-8 we would feel, justly I think, that the series is inordinately long. But this is not its sole function; the mythological illustrations also have allusive and implicit links with the elegy as a whole. In order to bring these out, it will be necessary to analyse briefly the movement of feeling in the poem from *l*.11, following the exempla-series, to the end (*l*.32).

The poet's emotions in II,14 oscillate between two points: a feeling of almost superhuman bliss on the one hand, and a feeling of mistrust and despair stemming from past unhappy experience on the other. No sooner has Propertius declared his joy for the first time in 9 f. than he qualifies it in the next couplet, 11 f., by a reminiscence of his past misery:

at dum demissis supplex ceruicibus ibam,
  dicebar sicco uilior esse lacu.

In the following couplet (13 f.), his success is again uppermost in the poet's mind,[28] but once more it is immediately qualified, by the next four lines (15-18), in which he complains that the remedy has come too late, and that he was too blind to see it before. The poet's

---

27. In just the same way *qualis ... qualis ... qualis ... talis* in I,3,1-8 underlined the explicit purpose of the exempla-series there.

28. We should note, however, that he now talks about that success in purely negative terms, with something of the tone of Catullus' *nec puella nolebat* (VIII,7).

triumph in winning his mistress is then treated at some length in *ll.*19-28, but the poem eventually ends on a doubtful despairing note, in *ll.*29-32.[29] The feeling of the elegy as a whole is thus that his present joy, great though it is, is almost outweighed by the long and cruel suffering he has had to undergo before attaining to that joy.[30]

The series of mythological exempla which opens II,14 is intimately connected with the thought of the poem as we have just described it. The first pair of exempla conveys not simply the idea of joy (the explicit point of comparison), but of joy after long hard toil. We know that both Agamemnon and Ulysses attained their respective goals only after ten years arduous labour. In the Ulysses-exemplum this is made explicit by the words *errore exacto* (*l.*3); in the Agamemnon-exemplum we infer it from what we know of the hero and his background. The implicit connexion between the experience of these heroes of myth and the experience of the poet emerges as the elegy proceeds. In *ll.*11, 15 and 17, the words *demissis supplex ceruicibus ibam*, *tam sero* and *ante pedes caecis lucebat semita nobis* (cp. *errore*, *l.*3) make clear that Propertius' *gaudia* exactly like the joys of Agamemnon and Ulysses, were won only after long, arduous, often fruitless, toil. The Agamemnon-exemplum is also relevant in another way. It first introduces the idea of joy in military victory being less than the poet's joy in a night with his mistress, an idea Propertius takes up again in 23-8, where he speaks of his love-triumph as greater than any military triumph over the Parthians.[31] At the very end

---

29. These four lines, separated from the rest of the elegy by some editors, are adequately defended by E. Reitzenstein (*op.cit.* n.12) pp.72 f.

30. I certainly cannot agree with D. Shackleton Bailey, *Propertiana*, Cambridge 1956, p.92, when he says that II,14 '... so far from containing any suggestion of disaster, is a paean of triumph like the second portion of I.8'. Lines 15 f., in particular, seem to me incompatible with this view.

31. The connexion is noted by E. Reitzenstein, *op.cit.*, p.72.

of the elegy we find yet another echo of a notion introduced in mythic form at the start, this time in the exemplum involving Ulysses. In *ll.*29 f. Propertius uses the image of a boat reaching shore to express the idea of attainment of *his* desire, just as, in the Ulysses-exemplum (3 f.) he used the line *cum tetigit carae litora Dulichiae* to express the idea of the fulfilment of the *hero's* dearest wishes. And the parallel between the two passages is underlined by the echo of *litora, l.*4, in *litora, l.*29.[32]

The second pair of exempla (5-8), involving Electra and Ariadne, has an emphasis somewhat different from that of the opening pair. Joy is still at issue - but now the predominant idea is of an almost febrile joy following on despair.[33] In the Electra-exemplum *saluum* (5), in the hexameter, hints that Electra did not really expect ever to see her brother again; and the pentameter gives the reason why. Similarly in the Ariadne-exemplum *incolumem* (7) hints at Ariadne's having despaired of Theseus' safety before she saw him emerge unharmed from the labyrinth. Happiness came to both heroines contrary to all expectation. And this is exactly Propertius' case; to him too joy came as he wept (cp. *ploranti,l.*14, of the poet, with *fleuerat, l.*6, of Electra), when he had almost despaired of winning his mistress (*ll.*15 ff.).

In II,14 then, Propertius deals with a situation of some complexity, in which his present joy, his past misery, his future uncertainty, are all involved. And

---

32. I owe the observation of this parallel to J. Vaio, 'The Authenticity and Relevance of Propertius 2.14.29-32', *CPh* 57, 1962, 236-8. Vaio, however, presses the connexion between 29 f. and 3 f. too hard when he says of *l.*30 that '... the image of the laden boat refers to Odysseus' ship, implicit in 3-4, the ship laden with gifts that brings him home to Ithaca' (p.237).

33. The difference between the two pairs of exempla was noticed already by Kuinoel: 'Duo priora exempla 1-4. gaudium indicant post longum temporis spatium perceptum; postea 5-8. nec opinatum.' (*comm. ad* 1-8)

the mythological exempla which open the poem are, as has been demonstrated, of a similar complexity. Here, as elsewhere in the *Elegies*, Propertius takes advantage of the fact that *every* human situation is potentially complex, and hence susceptible of more than one interpretation. By selecting just these human characters of mythology with their particular backgrounds and experiences, the poet enables the exempla in which they occur not only to illustrate the thought with which they are formally connected, but also to cast light upon the different aspects of his own personal experience presented by the poem.

The next use of exempla to be examined is a fairly simple one. The exempla in question occur in II,16, 29-30:

> aspice quid donis Eriphyla inuenit amaris,
> arserit et quantis nupta Creusa malis.

In the earlier part of the elegy Propertius complained that Cynthia had been won with gifts (see especially *ll*.15-24); now, by referring to the well-known stories of Eriphyla and Creusa, he warns her directly about the dire consequences that acceptance of gifts may bring. *Dona* in *l*.18 is picked up by *donis* in the first exemplum, adding weight to the poet's warning. In this instance the significance of the mythological illustrations is kept within fairly narrow limits by the poet. We are not meant to bring the whole history of Eriphyla and Creusa into our field of vision; we must rather focus only on certain relevant details, namely that both heroines accepted presents, and that something terrible befell them as a direct consequence (Eriphyla was slain by her son, while Creusa was consumed by fire).[34]

By having us focus on this second detail (the

---

34. Schöne (*diss.cit.* n.4) p.16, rightly criticises Rothstein for attempting to make a distinction between the effects of the two exempla, based upon the histories of the heroines involved.

terrible consequences of accepting gifts) Propertius enables the exempla to perform an anticipatory function in the poem. Before *ll.*29 f. the poet talked simply of Cynthia's greed for presents without mention of consequences. But from *l.*43 to the end, picking up the theme first introduced by the exempla, he warns Cynthia of the woes gifts may bring in their train. He hopes that all she has been given may become as nothing (43-6) so that she may not be struck by Jupiter's lightning (47-56).

Also comparatively straightforward is the use of myth in II,24b, at *ll.*25 f. and 43-6. Little needs to be said about the Labours of Hercules mentioned in 25 f.:

> si libitum tibi erit, Lernaeas pugnet ad hydras
> et tibi ab Hesperio mala dracone ferat.

Myth is here used simply as shorthand: the killing of the Lernaean Hydra and the theft of the Apples of the Hesperides stand for the hardest tasks the poet can think of. More interesting are the exempla involving Ariadne and Theseus, Phyllis and Demophoon, Jason and Medea, in *ll.*43-6.

The couplet preceding *l.*43 prepares the way for the introduction of the mythological exempla:

> crédo ego non paucos ista periisse figura,
> credo ego sed multos non habuisse fidem. (II,24b,41 f.)

Propertius here addresses his mistress, expressing the belief that men have often loved her for her beauty but have then been unfaithful. (He obviously has the rival implied by *ll.*23-32 in mind.) It is this twofold point that the exempla illustrate:

> paruo dilexit spatio Minoida Theseus,
> Phyllida Demophoon, hospes uterque malus.
> iam tibi Iasonia nota est Medea carina
> et modo seruato sola relicta uiro. (II,24b,43-6)

That the heroines Ariadne, Phyllis and Medea were beautiful[35] and were loved for their beauty goes without

---

35. See above, n.13.

saying; and that they were abandoned by their lovers is well-known. Thus far the illustrative purpose of the exempla is perfectly simple. But the exempla also serve a more subtle purpose. Earlier in the elegy the poet compared with himself a certain rival - now apparently in his girl's favour - to the rival's disadvantage. He predicted that this liaison between rival and mistress would not last long: *discidium uobis proximus annus erit.* (II,24b,32) Now, as if to prove this point conclusively, he takes it up in the exempla. The fact that Theseus and his son Demophoon deserted their respective beloveds after a short time, would be known to any one reasonably well acquainted with Greek myth. But Propertius consciously draws our attention to it by means of the phrase *paruo dilexit spatio* (*l.*43). As regards the third exemplum,[36] that of Jason and Medea, the traditional accounts of the myth make the time-interval between falling in love and desertion a much longer one. The poet however shapes his account in such a way as to make this interval seem very short. This he does by the simple addition of *modo* (*l.*46), implying that Jason (like a new Theseus) abandoned his beloved almost immediately after having been saved by her. Since the great heroes Theseus, Demophoon and Jason abandoned their women so very soon after taking up with them, his rival must surely desert his mistress within the year. This thought, first introduced by *l.*32, as was mentioned above, is thus implicitly confirmed by the exempla.

The complexity of myth, the fact that mythic characters, like human ones, always have more than one side to them, is most subtly exploited by Propertius in II,26b,45 ff. From *l.*45 of this elegy onwards, the poet puts forward, in mythological terms, an argument designed to prove that winds, waves, whirlpools, etc. - all the destructive forces of the sea - will be stilled during the passage of himself and the girl he loves. Accordingly he first seeks to show that this is at least possible,

---

36. This exemplum really belongs in Section iii, but for convenience sake it is treated here.

by relating the stories of Neptune's love of Amymone and Boreas' rape of Orithyia:

> sed non Neptunus tanto crudelis amori,
> Neptunus fratri par in amore Ioui:
> testis Amymone, latices dum ferret, in aruis
> compressa, et Lernae pulsa tridente palus;
> iam deus amplexu uotum persoluit, at illi
> aurea diuinas urna profudit aquas.
> crudelem et Borean rapta Orithyia negauit:
> hic deus et terras et maria alta domat. (II,26b,45-52)

Boreas and Neptune both loved once; the latter was *non crudelis amori* (*l*.45); hence they could both be expected to be favourable towards a modern pair of lovers.

So, it might seem, the point is proved and the lovers will indeed have fair weather. But there is a difficulty. If we found the names 'Neptunus' and 'Boreas' occurring *simpliciter*, in a context where weather was being discussed, we would recognise them as simple cases of antonomasia for 'sea' and 'wind' respectively. But in the present context, where these names should, for the purpose of the argument, name nature-deities, they in fact name *individuals* who loved particular heroines. It was as an individual, not as the sea, that Neptune loved Amymone, and again, it was not as the north wind, but as an individual, that Boreas carried off Orithyia. There is a gap in the reasoning here which Propertius has skilfully succeeded in disguising by his use of the ambiguous mythological names 'Neptunus' and 'Boreas'.[37] It is, however, evident that Propertius was quite well aware of the gap in his argument, since in *l*.52 - *hic deus et terras et maria alta domat* - following the second exemplum, he is at pains to point the identification between Boreas the power of nature and Boreas the lover.

---

37. We should note also the ambiguity of the phrase *non crudelis amori* (*l*.45). If we were to take the whole line - *sed non Neptunus tanto crudelis amori* - in the sense of the exemplum which follows, it would mean 'Neptune (*sc*. the individual) was not harsh in his love for Amymone', but this would go no way towards proving the point at issue. Clearly, the poet intends us to take the line, as we do in fact take it, to mean 'The sea is not cruel to lovers'.

After the two exempla just discussed. Propertius presents the conclusion to his argument (*ll*.53-6). It is now confidently stated that he and his beloved will be troubled by no storms. The first couplet of the conclusion introduces the figures of Scylla and Charybdis into a context in which there can be no ambiguity about their role as sea-powers:

> crede mihi, nobis mitescet Scylla, nec umquam
> alternante uacans uasta Charybdis aqua. (II,26b,53 f.)

The use of the mythological names 'Scylla' and 'Charybdis' here, where they unambiguously name sea-powers only, is particularly effective, in that it recalls only the nature-deity aspect of Boreas and Neptune. And the pentameter, *l*.54, specifying Charybdis' attribute as a natural force, further emphasizes this one particular aspect. Such is the success with which the gap in the argument is closed by this skilful use of mythology, that the next line (55), in which no mythological names occur, follows on with perfect smoothness. The effect of 'the stars will shine in a clear sky' (i.e. Propertius and his girl will sail an untroubled sea) is felt to be precisely similar to that of, 'Scylla and Charybdis will be kind to us'.[38]

The last elegy to be treated of in this first section is II,28,[39] which deals with a near-fatal illness

---

38. Mention of 'ambiguity' and a 'gap in the argument' in the foregoing analysis should not be taken to imply any adverse judgment on Propertius. The use of ambiguity and the suppression of steps in an argument, flaws in a philosopher, may be virtues in a poet. Moreover, exploitation of the ambiguity surrounding a personal god who is at the same time a force of nature, was an accepted procedure among ancient poets (*cf*. Euripides' play on the ambiguity between Aphrodite as a goddess and as a force of nature in his *Hippolytus*, esp. *ll*.1268-81; also Propertius' play on the ambiguity between Amor and *amor* in II,12).

39. The dramatic unity of II,28 seems to me to justify the viewing of it as a single poem (with R. White, 'The Structure of Propertius 2.28: Dramatic Unity', *TAPhA* 89, 1958, 254-61; Enk; and Hubbard, *op.cit.*, pp.47-58; against Butler and Barber; U. Knoche, 'Gedanken und Vorschläge zur Interpretation von Properzens Gedicht 2,28', *Misc.Prop.*, Assisi 1957, 49-70; and Camps).

of the poet's mistress. Propertius employs myth on a number of occasions in this poem, sometimes simply using particular mythological characters and their background to illustrate some point of his girl's experience, sometimes deliberately shaping myth to fit its context closely, and sometimes using both techniques together. All three types of exempla distinguished at the start of this chapter are represented here. They should, of course, be dealt with in the sections in which they belong, but in order not to scatter the analysis of II,28 over a wide area, I have chosen to handle all the exempla in the elegy together.

In the first two places that he uses myth in II,28 (*ll.*9-12 and 17-24), Propertius shapes it in such a way that on each occasion it introduces a new train of thought into the poem. This is clearly the case as far as *ll.*9-12 are concerned. In the preceding lines the poet had already suggested two possible reasons for Cynthia's[40] desperate illness: Jupiter's action as god of the weather,[41] and Cynthia's having perjured herself. Now he says:

> num sibi collatam doluit Venus? illa peraeque
> prae se formosis inuidiosa dea est.
> an contempta tibi Iunonis templa Pelasgae?
> Palladis aut oculos ausa negare bonos? (II,28,9-12)

The fact that Propertius mentions in these lines the three goddesses - Venus, Juno and Athena - who were involved in the Judgment of Paris, strongly suggests that he has this particular myth in mind. But he here adapts it to his purpose, imagining a contest in which a fourth contestant, Cynthia, has decided that she is more beautiful than the three goddesses.[42] This is quite

---

40. When there is no reason to think otherwise, I shall take it for granted that the girl Propertius deals with in his elegies is Cynthia, even when she is not named.

41. For this persuasive interpretation of *ll.*1-5, see Hubbard, *op.cit.*, p.53.

42. That the decision has been made by Cynthia herself and not by a third person is clear from the couplet 13 f., immediately after the myth. (But Propertius is to blame for having put the idea into her head. *Cf.* II,2,13 f., where, after lauding his girl's beauty, he says: 'cedite iam, diuae, quas pastor uiderat olim/Idaeis tunicas ponere uerticibus!')

clear in the case of Venus and Athena, but not so clear in the case of Juno. We must assume either that *an contempta tibi Iunonis templa Pelasgae* (*l*.11) is simply an allusive way of saying that his girl has compared Juno unfavourably with herself, or that the line is corrupt,[43] and originally contained some reference to Juno's appearance.

The particular shape which Propertius gives to the mythological references enables him to extract from them a new possible reason for Cynthia's illness - which he does in the couplet immediately following. Here the hexameter, *semper, formosae, non nostis parcere uerbis* (*l*.13), sums up the thought of the preceding four lines, while the pentameter, *hoc tibi lingua nocens, hoc tibi forma dedit* draws the conclusion: it is Cynthia's rating her beauty above that of Venus, Athena, and Juno, that has caused the goddesses to inflict this illness on her. This conclusion is closely tied to the mythological references that give rise to it, by significant verbal echoes, *formosae* and *forma* in 13 and 14 pick up *formosis* in 10.[44]

The second occurrence of myth in the elegy is an exempla-series running from *l*.17 to *l*.24:

> Io uersa caput primos mugiuerat annos:
> nunc dea, quae Nili flumina uacca bibit.
> Ino etiam prima terris aetate uagata est:
> hanc miser implorat nauita Leucothoen.
> [Andromede monstris fuerat deuota marinis:

---

43. Butler and Barber are quite definite on this point. They comment: '*templa* (O) is impossible in this context, and probably due to *contempta*. It is clearly Juno's beauty that has been called in question.'

44. The verbal echoes here form just a part of a whole network of such echoes throughout II,28, the purpose of which seems to be to emphasize that loveliness is dangerous to its possessor; *cf.* *formosa* (2), *formosa* (27), *formosarum* (49), *formas* (53), *forma* (57), and also *pulchra* (50), *candida* (51).

haec eadem Persei nobilis uxor erat.[45]
Callisto Arcadios errauerat ursa per agros:
haec nocturna suo sidere uela regit. (II,28,17-24)

Here, once again, we find Propertius casting his exempla in such a form that they fulfil not only a clear explicit function, but also an implicit allusive one. The explicit function of the exempla is to illustrate the couplet which introduces the series:

sed tibi uexatae per multa pericula uitae
extremo ueniet mollior hora die. (II,28,15 f.)

We should note the structure which the poet gives to this couplet: the hexameter refers to the vicissitudes of Cynthia's life, the pentameter suggests that a happier lot awaits her when it ends. This particular structure - hexameter specifying the woes endured by a heroine during life, pentameter telling of reward attained to after death - is then repeated in each of the exempla which follow. The effect of great regularity is enhanced by the fact that each hexameter opens with the name of the heroine involved. The couplet 25 f. -

quod si forte tibi properarint fata quietem,
illa sepulturae fata beata tuae

- still preserving the structure remarked on above, now draws the conclusion for Cynthia. In fact *ll.*25 f. repeat exactly, though in different words, the thought of the couplet 15 f., which introduced the exempla-series. Propertius here employs the technique of ring-composition, repeating, both before and after the mythological exempla, the point that the exempla are intended to illustrate.

All this attention lavished by Propertius upon the

---

45. I concur with U. Knoche (*art.cit.* n.39) and Hubbard, *op.cit.*, p.54, n.1, in rejecting 21 f. Knoche rightly comments (of the exempla-series): 'Diese deutlich profilierte Reihe wird vs.21/22 durch das Andromeda-Beispiel peinlich unterbrochen' (p.62). The fact that Andromeda became Perseus' wife is not enough, '... dadurch würde schliesslich im besten Falle ihr Lebensglück hier auf Erden bezeichnet, nicht das, was Properz ja angesichts der fingierten Todesgefahr der Geliebten betonen will, dass nämlich Glück und Auszeichnung, ja Vergöttlichung zu erwarten sei, und zwar nach dem Tode (vs.16).' (p.63)

structure of his mythic illustrations enables them to perform, most efficiently, their explicit function, that of demonstrating to Cynthia that she will be rewarded after death for the hardships she has experienced in life. But the great care devoted by the poet to the shape of the exempla also serves another purpose. Together with his actual choice of mythological characters in 17-24, it allows the examples to perform as well a very interesting implicit function. The common denominator of the sufferings of Io, Ino and Callisto, outlined in the hexameters 17, 19 and 23, is that in each case the suffering was occasioned by Juno's jealousy.[46] And in the case of Io and Callisto at least, the cause of her jealousy was Jupiter's love for these heroines.[47] Then again, the recompense for suffering, mentioned in the pentameters 18, 20 and 24, was, for all three heroines, their transformation into deities. These common elements in the mythological illustrations inevitably suggest that Propertius is implying two things: first, that Jupiter has fallen in love with Cynthia and it is, accordingly, Juno's jealousy that is the cause of his girl's troubles; second, that her reward for a troubled life will be divinization, transformation into a heroine.[48]

That these are indeed the implications of the exempla series is confirmed by the next two couplets -

> narrabis Semelae, quo sit formosa periclo,
> credet et illa, suo docta puella malo;
> et tibi Maeonias omnis heroidas inter
> primus erit nulla non tribuente locus. (II,28,27-30)

---

46. This point is observed by Kölmel (*diss.cit.* n.5) p.136 n.2.

47. As far as Ino is concerned we know of no reason for Juno's jealousy other than that Ino had nursed Dionysus, son of Juno's rival Semele. For the possibility that Propertius may have thought of Ino too as having been loved by Jupiter, see Hubbard, *op.cit.*, p.54, n.1.

48. I follow Hubbard's interpretation of the exempla (*ibid.*, pp.53 f.). This would not be the only place in which Propertius imagines the possibility of Jupiter loving his mistress; *cf.* II,3,30 (addressed to his girl): *Romana accumbes prima puella Ioui.*

- in which the poet imagines Cynthia's life after death. In 27 f. we find her talking, most appropriately, to Semele, another heroine who was beloved of Jupiter, incurred Juno's jealousy and was worshipped after death as a deity. The 'danger' the poet's girl tells Semele of in *l.*27 can only be the danger of attracting Jupiter's attention by one's beauty and hence arousing Juno's jealousy. Semele 'will believe' (*credet*, 28) Cynthia, precisely because Cynthia has had exactly the same experience as herself. If more proof be needed that this interpretation is correct, it is supplied by *l.*33:

hoc tibi uel poterit coniunx ignoscere Iuno.[49] (II,28,33)

Here Juno's jealousy is quite unambiguously referred to (note the emphatic addition *coniunx*), while the thing for which she may 'forgive' Cynthia must be Jupiter's love of her. In this way the first implication of the exempla-series, that Jupiter is in love with Cynthia, occasioning Juno's jealousy, is brought out. The second implication, that Cynthia will be rewarded after death with divinization, now takes the form of explicit statement:

et tibi Maeonias omnis heroidas inter
primus erit nulla non tribuente locus. (II,28,29 f.)

So, not only is Cynthia, like the heroines of the mythological examples, pursued by Juno's jealousy because of Jupiter's love, but she will also, like them, be divinized and become, not just a heroine, but the greatest of all the heroines.

The exempla-series in 17-24 then, in the same way as the mythological references of 9-12, marks a new direction in the development of thought of the elegy by suggesting a new reason for Cynthia's plight. But *ll.*17-24, in addition, represent an advance over 9-12 in that they suggest a glorious reward for Cynthia after

---

49. The couplet 33 f. should not be transposed to follow *l.*2, as it is by Barber in his *OCT* (following Passerat *et al.*). It makes perfectly good sense in its proper context. *tibi* here refers to Cynthia, while *Iuno* is in apposition to *coniunx*.

death.

In the lines that follow (35-46) Cynthia's condition apparently worsens. Prayers are offered for her safety. After 46 we must imagine some lapse of time during which the gods of the underworld begin to display *clementia*. Then comes a long prayer (47 ff.) to Persephone and Hades, studded with the names of heroines:

> sunt apud infernos tot milia formosarum:
> pulchra sit in superis, si licet, una locis!
> uobiscum est Iope,[50] uobiscum candida Tyro,
> uobiscum Europe nec proba Pasiphae,
> et quot Troia tulit uetus et quot Achaia formas,
> et Thebae et Priami diruta regna senis. (II,28,49-54)

The function of the mythological references here is one of simple idealization; there are not the subtle implications we discerned in the earlier series. It is the mythic figures themselves and the associations that attach to them that are important now, rather than the poet's shaping and selection of detail. The litany of legendary beauties in 51 ff., (recalling Odysseus' vision of heroines in *Od*. XI) has the effect of assimilating Propertius' Cynthia to the lovely Greek heroines of old. The gods of the underworld already have every beautiful heroine that ever was; they do not need Cynthia too. Further, the roll-call of sonorous Greek names - Iope, Tyro, Europe, Pasiphae - and places, together with the persistent anaphora of *uobiscum* and *et*, lends an incantatory effect to the whole. Propertius is, as it were, trying to conjure Hades and Persephone with his word-magic. And ultimately (see 59-62) he is, happily, successful.

(ii) Shaped Exempla

The mythological exempla now to be dealt with, are those in which we can clearly discern the poet's hand at work shaping the form of the mythological references presented, adding and selecting details significant for the particular context in which they appear. In some

---

50. The *OCT* (with unnecessary caution I feel) prints †iope†.

of the exempla I shall discuss below it hardly matters that this or that particular mythological character is used for purposes of illustration; because of the way in which the poet has shaped the exempla, other names could perfectly well be substituted for the ones in fact used, without appreciable loss of meaning. However, in some of the other exempla to be discussed, the particular mythic gods, heroes or heroines mentioned, could not so easily be replaced. But the exempla are nevertheless handled in this section, because it is still *the way in which* Propertius has presented the stories of the characters involved that is of primary importance. In these cases the myths concerned would not on their own have suggested the interpretation Propertius places upon them for his particular purposes.

A very simple instance of mythology used in the manner just described occurs in II,15,13-16. The straightforward point that Propertius wishes to reinforce by means of the exempla in these lines, is made by the preceding couplet:

> non iuuat in caeco Venerem corrumpere motu:
> si nescis, oculi sunt in amore duces. (II,15,11 f.)

His meaning in this couplet is that Cynthia must remove every scrap of clothing (contrast *l.*6),[51] only so can his eyes be satisfied and his passion aroused. Examples from mythology are then introduced, the more forcibly to impress this injunction on Cynthia:

> ipse Paris nuda fertur periisse Lacaena,
> cum Menelaeo surgeret e thalamo:
> nudus et Endymion Phoebi cepisse sororem
> dicitur et nudae concubuisse deae. (II,15,13-16)

The whole burden of the exempla is carried by the words

---

51. I agree with K. Barwick, 'Zur Interpretation von Properz 2,15 und 14', *Philologus* 99, 1955, 112-32, p.114, that it is Cynthia's coyness in refusing to remove her *tunica* that is at issue here, rather than the idea that it is better to make love with the lamp lit (as E. Reitzenstein (*op.cit.* n.12) p.76, referring us to *l.*4, interprets line 11). The former interpretation better suits both the exempla and the lines (17 ff.) immediately following them.

nuda fertur periisse, nudus ... cepisse, nudae concubuisse. The characters of the exempla, Paris, Helen, Endymion, and Phoebe, could be replaced by any other combination of gods or heroes of the appropriate sex and the effect of the mythological examples would remain the same. What matters here is the detail that Propertius has woven into their stories for his own purposes, the fact of their alluring nakedness. With examples of divine and heroic nudity before her, Cynthia could not fail to be convinced.

It is worth noting that, in adding the above persuasive details to the exempla, Propertius has produced unique versions of the myths concerned. Nowhere else do we hear that Paris saw Helen going naked from Menelaus' chamber,[52] or that Endymion lay with naked Phoebe.[53] In order the more effectively to persuade his mistress, the poet simply allows his imagination to import the appropriate detail into myths where it was not traditionally at home.

A rather more subtle use of myth occurs at I,8b,35 f., where Propertius shapes his mythological reference in such a way that it makes a transition in the thought of the poem. The lines containing the exemplum occur right in the middle of the elegy:

> ... maluit esse mea,
> quam sibi dotatae regnum uetus Hippodamiae,
> et quas Elis opes ante pararat equis. (I,8b,34-6)

Preceding these lines the thought is that the poet, though poor, is dear to Cynthia. Even fabulous wealth, without him, means nothing to her. But following these

---

52. An episode something like this is, however, known from the visual arts; see Enk *ad loc.*: 'haec apud nullum scriptorem traduntur, sed talia depicta videmus in vase quod est in Ruvo, cf. W.H. Roscher, Lexikon der Griech. und Rom. Mythologie I, pp.1961 et 1962.' (A drawing of the vase mentioned by Enk is incorporated in Roscher's text. We are shown Helen sitting nude on a bed, while Paris approaches wearing only a cloak, in heroic fashion.)

53. Once again it is possible that Propertius is here influenced by erotic visual representations.

lines the idea is that, however much his rival may give her, she will not, greedy for wealth, desert the poet.

It is clear from the first word of *l*.35, *quam*, which depends on *maluit* in *l*.34, that, formally, the exemplum is intended to illustrate what has gone before. Its function is to demonstrate the extent of Cynthia's preference for him by showing the magnitude of the riches she would reject. The deliberately selected detail *regnum uetus* picks up the *dulcia regna* of *l*.32, while the pentameter intensifies the suggestion of vast wealth contained in the hexameter. But this is not the sole function of the exemplum. The word *dotatae* (*l*.35), very carefully chosen by Propertius,[54] lays emphasis on the fact that her great wealth was *given* to Hippodamia, it was not something she simply possessed. Thus the exemplum serves to prepare the way for the thought following it, which concerns a rival who has given Cynthia much in the past and may give her even more in the future. With the image of the richly-endowed Hippodamia still before our minds we easily make the transition from the idea of Cynthia putting the poet before great riches, to the thought that she will not desert him for a rival who can afford to give her expensive gifts.

In I,15,9-22 Propertius makes extensive and creative use of the technique we have seen in action in the preceding pages. The situation from which the examples in this elegy take their cue is as follows: Propertius is in some sort of danger (quite what this danger is, is obscure; commentators plausibly suggest it is an illness), and yet Cynthia is slow to visit him (1-4). She can even take time to do her hair and adorn herself, like a beautiful woman going off to a new lover (5-8)! The poet then brings in the first exemplum of the series of four:

---

54. *Cf.* Rothstein, *ad loc.*: '... in *dotatae* selbst steckt der Begriff, der poetisch umschrieben werden soll ...'

at non sic Ithaci digressu mota Calypso
desertis olim fleuerat aequoribus:
multos illa dies incomptis maesta capillis
sederat, iniusto multa locuta salo,
et quamuis numquam post haec uisura, dolebat
illa tamen, longae conscia laetitiae. (I,15,9-14)

The explicit function of this episode from myth, as *at non sic* indicates, is to demonstrate that Calypso did not take care of *her* appearance when *her* beloved was in a situation of considerable danger.[55] In this respect, of course, she affords a direct contrast to Cynthia. And Propertius ensures that the general contrast is as strong as possible by building in a number of subsidiary contrasts in detail between exemplum and context. The most obvious of these is the discrepancy between the respective treatment by Cynthia and Calypso of their hair; the poet's girl, we are told, was sufficiently complacent *hesternos componere crinis* (5) whereas the heroine sat *incomptis capillis* (11).[56] Again, Calypso wept (*fleuerat, l.*10) for her lover; so also did Cynthia, but hers were crocodile tears (*quis te cogebat ... fletum inuitis ducere luminibus? ll.*39 f.). And lastly, in telling us that his girl is *admissae conscia nequitiae* (38), Propertius seems deliberately and ironically to echo what he has told us of Calypso, that she was *longae conscia laetitiae* (14).

So much for the explicit purpose of the exemplum as indicated by *non sic* at the start. But the Calypso-exemplum has also an additional implicit function which it shares with the other exempla of the series. As the mythological illustration proceeds, we realise that Propertius is telling us not just about Calypso's dishevelled state, but also about her devotion to Odysseus. This is implied already by the first four lines of the exemplum (9-12) and then becomes quite

---

55. This *non sic* indicating that a heroine of myth did not adorn herself, reminds us of the *non sic*, used for precisely the same purpose, introducing the exempla-series in I,2,15 ff. (see below, pp.144 ff.).

56. The detail need not be sheer invention on Propertius' part; it may derive from a painting. Rothstein (note *ad loc.*) draws our attention to a *Calypso sedens* of the painter Nikias, mentioned by the Elder Pliny (*NH* 35,132).

plain in the concluding couplet:

> et quamuis numquam post haec uisura,[57] dolebat
> illa tamen, longae conscia laetitiae. (I,15,13 f.)

The contrast with Cynthia is again obvious: Calypso showed her deep concern for a man she would never see again, whereas Cynthia did not even bother about the lover she had with her.

The poet then continues:

> nec sic Aesoniden rapientibus anxia uentis
> Hypsipyle uacuo constitit in thalamo:
> Hypsipyle nullos post illos sensit amores,
> ut semel Haemonio tabuit hospitio. (I,15,17-20)

It is interesting to note that, as the exempla-series progresses, the point it was originally introduced to illustrate is more and more lost sight of, while the matter of the heroines' devotion and fidelity becomes correspondingly more and more prominent.[58] In the exemplum now under consideration only *nec sic* reminds us that we should be thinking of Hypsipyle's lack of adornment; the burden of these lines rests on the fact that the heroine remained so constant to Jason's memory that she never loved again.

In the final pair of exempla -[59]

---

57. This is very like what the poet tells us of Penelope in II,9,7 (see below, pp.157 f.) to emphasize *her* fidelity: *uisura et quamuis numquam speraret Ulixem* etc.

58. Noted by Rothstein; see his comment on *l*.19.

59. Editors since Lachmann have generally shifted the Alphesiboea-exemplum (15 f.) either to precede or to follow the Evadne-exemplum (21 f.). Their reason for so doing is twofold: 1) in its present position the couplet 15 f. awkwardly interrupts the sequence *at non sic* (9) ... *nec sic* (17); 2) in its new position the couplet allows the exempla-series to build up to a climax, with each successive heroine showing greater and greater devotion to a beloved (whether 15 f. is to precede or follow 21 f. then depends on which one thinks a greater token of devotion - suicide or fratricide). Some critics are content to leave the exempla-series as it stands, finding in it a wave-like, rather than a climactic, progression (see L. Alfonsi, 'Ancora Sull' Elegia XV del Primo Libro di Properzio', *SIFC* 17, 1940, 123-35, p.134; and A.W. Allen, 'Cynthia's Bedside Manner', *Phoenix* 27, 1973, 381-5, pp.383 f.). Certainty is impossible here, but I prefer to follow the line-numeration of the *OCT*, according to which the Alphesiboea-exemplum is the penultimate of the series.

Alphesiboea suos ulta est pro coniuge fratres,
sanguinis et cari uincula rupit amor.
coniugis Euadne miseros delata per ignis
occidit, Argiuae fama pudicitiae. (I,15,15-16 and 21-22)

- there is no allusion at all to the original point of departure of the exempla-series. Now Propertius' sole concern is to provide the most powerful examples possible of feminine devotion to a partner.

Quite clearly, in presenting this exempla-series, Propertius has worked creatively on the myths involved to make them serve precisely the purpose he wants. It was no part of the mythological tradition that Calypso and Hypsipyle neglected their appearance while mourning for the departure of Odysseus and Jason respectively. But because the poet wants these heroines to afford a contrast to Cynthia, with her unseasonable concern to adorn herself, he simply tells us it was so. And again, although none of the four heroines of the exempla, with the exception of Evadne, was traditionally held up as an example of devoted fidelity to a loved one, Propertius contrives to make Penelopes of them all. In the case of Calypso and Hypsipyle he takes advantage of the fact that the mythological tradition implies a degree of devotion on the part of the former, and knows of no later love-affair on the part of the latter. These things being so (Propertius seems to reason) Calypso *must* have mourned bitterly at Odysseus' departure (although Homer does not say so) and Hypsipyle *must* have loved Jason so passionately that she could never love again (although Apollonius Rhodius makes no mention of the fact). And as for Alphesiboea, Propertius seems unashamedly to have invented the token of her devotion to her partner, namely, that she slew her brothers. In the normal accounts of the myth it was the sons of her husband's second union that did the deed.[60]

---

60. For the somewhat complicated details of the story, see Enk's comment on *l*.15. In the same place he states, 'Alphesiboean fratres suos interfecisse, id quod Propertius narrat, apud nullum alium scriptorem traditur'.

The exemplum to be considered next, the Melampus-exemplum in II,3,51-4, presents a case somewhat different from that of the mythological illustrations examined so far in this section. Here we find Propertius not so much tampering with details, as skilfully altering the whole traditional import of the myth, giving it a new meaning in order that it may perform the function he wishes. The traditional version[61] of the story of Melampus ran something as follows: Bias, son of Amythaon, was in love with Pero, daughter of king Neleus. But Neleus demanded the cattle of Iphiclus (or his father Phylacus) in exchange for his daughter's hand. Bias asked his brother, the seer Melampus, to rustle the cattle for him. This Melampus succeeded in doing, but only after suffering imprisonment at the hands of Iphiclus. The cattle were handed over to Neleus, and Bias married Pero.

It is important to note that Propertius does not specifically contradict a single detail of this traditional version; but the very clever way in which he shapes his account of the myth, makes it suggest a rather different story:

> turpia perpessus uates est uincla Melampus,
> cognitus Iphicli surripuisse boues;
> quem non lucra, magis Pero formosa coegit,
> mox Amythaonia nupta futura domo. (II,3,51-4)

One *can* interpret these lines as recounting the usual version of the myth, but clearly the implication is that Melampus, just like an elegiac lover,[62] suffered disgrace[63] for the sake of the lovely Pero, and thus won her hand.[64]

---

61. To be found, e.g., in Theocritus III,43-5; Apollodorus, *Library*, I,9,12; Pausanias IV,36,3.

62. Note the ambiguity of *uates* in 51. On a traditional reading it would mean 'seer', but by implication it suggests 'poet' - thus pointing the parallel between Melampus and Propertius.

63. *turpia uincla* in line 51 strongly suggests the disgraceful *seruitium amoris* of the elegists.

64. It may well be that this whole interpretation was suggested to Propertius by the Homeric version of the myth (*Od.*XI, 287-97) which makes no mention of Bias and implies that Melampus rustled the cattle of Iphiclus to win Pero for himself.

The ambiguity as between the two interpretations, the traditional and the elegiac, revolves chiefly around the words *coegit* and *mox nupta futura*.

Propertius' reason for shaping the Melampus-exemplum in just this particular way is clear: it is in order that the myth may accurately reflect the thought which prompts its introduction. The content of *ll*.45-50 preceding the myth, is well summarized by Shackleton Bailey:

> 'Now (*iam*) that I am her slave again let me at all events keep to my *assuetum seruitium*; let me go no further and fare no worse (45-46). [Shackleton Bailey, correctly in my view, reads Lachmann's *hei* for *aut*, *l*.45.] It is a mistake to attempt escape, for while the early stages of love's bondage irk an independent spirit, the yoke is eased by familiarity (47-50).' [65]

The crucial words, so far as the exemplum is concerned, occur in the couplet 49 f.: *iuuenes ... in amore ... aequa et iniqua ferunt*. It is just this thought that Propertius' version of the story of Melampus illustrates. Melampus, a 'poet-lover', 'took the rough with the smooth' in love: he suffered disgraceful bondage (*iniqua*) but won his mistress (*aequa*).

The function of the exempla dealt with so far has been to afford a parallel to, or some kind of comparison with, the experience of the characters in the elegies concerned. The purpose of the Milanion-exemplum in I,1, which we shall look at next, is rather different. What this purpose is, is not explicitly stated by the poet; but it becomes clear from a careful reading of the poem that we are here dealing with, not a comparison, but a strong contrast between myth and personal experience.[66]

---

65. D. Shackleton Bailey, *Propertiana*, Cambridge 1956, p.67.

66. *Cf*. A.W. Allen, 'Elegy and the Classical Attitude toward Love: Propertius I,1', *YClS* 11, 1950, 255-77, p.269: 'The example comes without introduction ... The very abruptness of its appearance (since there is no word or explicit sign of connexion) and the placing of Milanion's name in the first position in the verse suggest a contrast with Propertius himself.'

Milanion nullos fugiendo, Tulle, labores
saeuitiam durae contudit Iasidos.
nam modo Partheniis amens errabat in antris,
ibat et hirsutas ille uidere feras;
ille etiam Hylaei percussus uulnere rami
saucius Arcadiis rupibus ingemuit.
ergo uelocem potuit domuisse puellam:
tantum in amore preces et bene facta ualent. (I,1,9-16)

Although I,1 and, in particular, this exemplum have been extensively discussed by commentators and critics,[67] the individual *form* of the exemplum seems generally to have been overlooked. In fact, the story of Milanion is cast by Propertius in the form of a ring-composition. Within the exemplum proper, its main point, the success of Milanion in winning his cruel mistress, due to his perseverance, is emphasized in both the opening and closing couplets of the mythological example (*ll.*9 f. and 15 f.). The content of these two couplets is virtually the same: *saeuitiam durae contudit Iasidos* in 10 is picked up by *uelocem potuit domuisse puellam* in 15, while *Milanion nullos fugiendo labores* in 9 is picked up by *tantum preces et bene facta ualent* in 16. Furthermore, the point in Propertius' own experience - the failure of the Powers of Love to assist him in conquering Cynthia - with which the experience of Milanion so sharply contrasts, is alluded to both immediately before the exemplum (*l.*8) and immediately after it (*l.*17). In *l.*8 we read *aduersos cogor habere deos* (these *deos* can only be the deities of love, Venus and Amor), while in *l.*17 the poet says *in me tardus Amor non ullas cogitat artis*, 'in my case love is sluggish and devises no stratagems'. By using the device of ring-composition Propertius succeeds in enhancing greatly the effectiveness of the exemplum. His own experience is twice immediately juxtaposed with a summary statement of the experience of the mythic hero

---

67. For details see *Bibliography*. In my view the best general discussions are those of Allen (*ibid.*) and W. Hering, 'Quid haec elegia sibi velit, non ita facile dictu, Ein Beitrag zum Verständnis von Properz I,1', *Philologus* 114, 1970, 99-117. There are also some useful remarks in F. Cairns, 'Some Observations on Propertius I,1', *CQ* XXIV, 1974, 94-110, and R. Hanslik, 'Zum ersten Gedicht der Monobiblos des Properz', *WS* 10, 1976, 186-98.

Milanion, and the contrast between their fates is thus powerfully emphasized.

But it is not only in the form of the mythological exemplum that we can detect Propertius' shaping activity. The details of the content too, are carefully selected by him. This is one of those cases where it hardly matters who the particular mythic characters involved were. In *ll.*9 f. and 15 f. all that concerned us was that X, by his devotion and perseverance, eventually subdued Y. So, similarly, in the lines in between these two couplets, it does not concern us who Hylaeus was, or where the glades of Parthenius were. What does concern us, and what is clearly brought out by the poet, is Milanion's *suffering*. The significance of lines 11-14 is to be found in the details *amens errabat, ibat uidere feras,*[68] *percussus uulnere saucius ingemuit.* Propertius deliberately includes these details in his exemplum in order to point the close parallel between Milanion's experience and his own. *Amens* (11) of the hero, referring to his desperate passion for the daughter of Iasius (Atalanta), picks up *furor* (7), the word the poet uses to characterise his own passion; and the element of madness in Milanion's *amentia* reminds us of Propertius driven *nullo uiuere consilio* (6).[69] Further, the mythological hero's suffering at the hands of Hylaeus (13 f.) recalls the poet's suffering at the hands of Amor (3 ff.) - in both cases a mistress being the ultimate cause of their pain.

There are parallels too between the women involved, Atalanta and Cynthia. We hear of the *saeuitiam* of *durae* Atalanta (10), and her unapproachability may be inferred from *domuisse* (15). That Cynthia was similarly cruel is not directly stated by Propertius in this particular elegy, but is quite clearly implied by *Cynthia miserum*

---

68. Taking *uidere* in a strong sense 'to brave' (see Camps' note *ad loc.*).

69. These parallels are noted by Hering (*art.cit.* n.67) p.109: 'das *amens errare* (v.11) ist eben auch jener Zustand, der in den vorausgehenden Versen mit *furor* und *nullo vivere consilio* gekennzeichnet wurde und hier wieder aufgegriffen wird.'

me cepit (1) and a line *sit modo libertas quae uelit ira loqui* (28).

The effect of all these similarities in content between the myth and its surrounding context is, paradoxically, to make all the greater the contrast between Propertius and Milanion. In circumstances which were very similar - both were faced by a harsh mistress, both were driven to distraction by their passion, both suffered for their love - the mythological hero, as was only fitting (*cf. ergo, l.*15), won his Atalanta, whereas the poet is as far off as ever from his Cynthia.

In its form, the way in which its content is handled, and its effect, Propertius' Milanion-exemplum strikingly resembles the Aktaion-exemplum introduced by Callimachus into his *Hymn* V.[70] The resemblances are as follows. First, both exempla appear in the form of a ring-composition in which the point to be illustrated by the mythic story and the main point of that story, are immediately juxtaposed at the beginning and end of the exemplum. Second, there is in both cases a contrast between this epic form of the exemplum and the elegiac metre in which the myth is narrated.[71] Third, both Callimachus and Propertius are most careful to create a number of connexions in detail between the exemplum and the context in which it occurs. And, fourth, the effect of all this attention to detail is in both cases the same: the similarity of circumstances between Aktaion and Teiresias on the one hand, and between Milanion and Propertius on the other, only serves to throw into stark relief the very different outcome of their respective fates.

These are the similarities. It is impossible, of

---

70. See above, Chapter 1, pp.25-32.

71. For the epic qualities of Callimachus' Aktaion-exemplum, see above, pp.25-7. It is interesting to note, in the case of Propertius, that (beside its form) the language of the Milanion-exemplum is characterised by H. Tränkle as strongly epic in character (*Die Sprachkunst des Properz*, Wiesbaden 1960, pp.12-15).

course, to say certainly whether or not Propertius had in mind the Callimachean exemplar when composing I,1. But I would venture to suggest that it is, at least, quite likely in a poet who more than once hails the Alexandrian as his master, and that it may well have been Callimachus and the other Alexandrian poets, whose uses of exempla were examined in Chapter 1, who showed Propertius how to adapt mythological exempla to his own purposes within the confines of the short carefully-worked elegies he wrote.

In the immediately following elegy of Book I, Propertius again skilfully and subtly shapes mythological illustrations so as to make them play a vital role in the development of thought of the poem. In this case the role is a twofold one.[72] The exempla-series in I,2,15-24, because of the peculiar character imparted to it by the poet, both illustrates what precedes, and anticipates what follows it.

The first eight lines of I,2 show us Propertius attempting to persuade Cynthia that artificial adornment is unnecessary. Amor, he tells her, is not attacted by artifice (*l*.8). Then, after six lines of examples drawn from the world of Nature, come the mythological exempla:

> non sic Leucippis succendit Castora Phoebe,
> Pollucem cultu non Hilaira soror;
> non, Idae et cupido quondam discordia Phoebo,
> Eueni patriis filia litoribus;
> nec Phrygium falso traxit candore maritum
> auecta externis Hippodamia rotis. (I,2,15-20)

The purpose of these examples is, apparently, simply to reinforce the point made by *l*.8, that Love is no lover of artifice. And they certainly do this most effectively. But we should note that the female characters Phoebe, Hilaira, Marpessa and Hippodamia have, in themselves, nothing whatever to do with the point at issue. As Hubbard remarks, '.... one could in l.2 ... substitute another bunch of heroines and make precisely the same

---

72. As has been pointed out by A.W. Allen in his fine analysis of I,2 (*op.cit.* n.2) pp.139-42.

statement".[73] That the heroines in fact used by Propertius *do* illustrate the point they are meant to, is due entirely to the way in which he has shaped the stories of which they are the heroines. We learn that these mythological ladies did not adorn themselves (the point at issue), from the details *non sic* (*sc. cultu*) ... *cultu*[74] ... *non* (*sc. cultu*) ... *nec falso candore*; but that, in their simple state, they nevertheless succeeded in arousing a powerful passion in their admirers, from the further details *succendit* ... *cupido* ... *traxit*. These are all points supplied to the exempla by Propertius' imagination. The poet has made explicit details only implicit in the mythological tradition for a specific purpose of his own, namely, to prove his point that Cynthia does not need adornment to make her attractive.

All the threads woven into the exempla-series and examined in the preceding paragraph are brought together by the poet in the couplet:

> sed facies aderat nullis obnoxia gemmis,
> qualis Apelleis est color in tabulis. (I,2,21 f.)

The couplet that follows comes as something of a surprise. Propertius now finds in the mythological examples an entirely new point, which nothing could have prepared us for. He says of his heroines:

> non illis studium uulgo conquirere amantis:
> illis ampla satis forma pudicitia. (I,2,23 f.)

We are now told, not that these heroines were beautiful in their unadorned simplicity, but that *faithfulness*[75] was for them beauty enough. Once again, this is an idea which is not associated with any of the heroines concerned - it is simply read into the exempla by Propertius because it is useful to him at this stage of the elegy. Any thought of the point which the exempla were originally

---

73. Hubbard, *op.cit.*, p.39.

74. *cultu* (16) within the exempla-series, echoes *cultu* (5) before the series, and is picked up by *culta* (26) following it.

75. *pudicitia* (24): to the elegists this meant faithfulness to a single lover, rather than chastity (see Allen (*op.cit.* n.2) p.141).

introduced to prove, has now been left behind. The poet has introduced this new idea, 'faithfulness equals chastity', not to illustrate what has gone before the myths, but to anticipate what comes after them.

The point Propertius has been anticipating is made in the following couplet:

> non ego nunc uereor ne sim tibi uilior istis:
> uni si qua placet, culta puella sat est. (I,2,25 f.)

He now indirectly applies to Cynthia the novel idea he has extracted from the mythological exempla. The implication is that Cynthia, like the heroines, will have all the adornment she needs if only she will be faithful to him, as the heroines were faithful to their respective heroes.

One other detail should be noted. In *l*.25 Propertius talks of rivals (*istis*) for his girl's affection. This introduction of competitors may seem rather sudden, as none has been mentioned so far in the poem. But the attentive reader has in fact been prepared for the idea of rivalry by the exempla. It was well known that the Dioscuri had fought with the sons of Aphareus, Idas and Lynceus, over the daughters of Leucippus; the rivalry between Idas and Apollo over Marpessa is explicitly referred to in 17 f., *Idae et cupido quondam discordia Phoebo*; and Pelops (*Phrygium maritum*, *l*.19) was but one among many suitors for the hand of Hippodamia.[76] Thus, by using these particular myths in which rivalry over women is involved Propertius prepares the way for the notion of rivalry between himself and other men over Cynthia in *l*.25.

In I,2, then, the exempla of the Leucippides, Marpessa,and Hippodamia,perform a transitional function in the elegy. Because of the particular details (lack

---

76. The element of rivalry in the exempla is rightly noted by L.C. Curran (in an otherwise very fanciful article), '"Nature to Advantage Dressed": Propertius i.2', *Ramus* 4, 1975, 1-16, p.7. As regards 19 f., Curran takes the rivalry at issue to be that between Pelops and Oenomaus; I am sure we should think rather of competition between Pelops and the other suitors of Hippodamia.

of adornment, faithfulness) that Propertius has worked into or read into them, the myths are enabled equally to illustrate the thought of the opening eight lines of the poem and to lead into the thought of its last eight lines. The idea of rivalry in the exempla similarly prepares us for what follows. But here there is a difference. This is not an idea the poet has simply read into the myths; it is inherent in them. Accordingly this aspect of the exempla should properly have been discussed in section (i), but for convenience sake it has been dealt with here.

Mythological exempla and context are neatly joined by Propertius in a short elegy now to be considered, II,21. The occasion (imaginary or otherwise) of this poem was a letter from a certain Panthus to Propertius' mistress, apparently slandering the poet. He dismisses the slanders peremptorily in the first two lines of the elegy and goes on gently to mock his mistress. The poet has news for her: *uxorem ille tuus pulcher amator habet*! (*l*.4) His mockery centres around the fact that his girl was far too credulous in committing herself to this Panthus (*cf. nimium credula*, *l*.6). Only now does she discover that he was married all along (or has just got married - *l*.4 would support either interpretation). Propertius further torments her with the thought that she has become an object of ridicule to Panthus and his wife (7 f.).

It is this situation just outlined, that the exempla in *ll*.11-14 are introduced to illustrate:

> Colchida sic hospes quondam decepit Iason:
> eiecta est (tenuit namque Creusa) domo.
> sic a Dulichio iuuene est elusa Calypso:
> uidit amatorem pandere uela suum. (II,21,11-14)

The repeated *sic* (*ll*.11 and 13) indicates that the connexion between myth and context is close. In both the exempla Propertius appears to twist the most commonly-known versions of the myths into forms which better serve his purpose. He wants the married Jason and Odysseus accurately to reflect the false husband Panthus (*ille*

maritus, *l*.10), and their victims to reflect his girl. So, in *ll*.11 f., the poet envisages a situation in which Jason has married Creusa unbeknown to Medea (*cf. decepit*, 11), and then turned the latter out of their house; while in 13 f. he represents Odysseus as having concealed the fact of his marriage from Calypso,[77] and as having abandoned her. Medea and Calypso, just like the poet's mistress, have been kept in the dark concerning their respective lover's marriage, and have then been rejected by him. The connexion between the mythological examples and the point they illustrate is strengthened by significant verbal echoes: *amatorem*, of Odysseus, in *l*.14, echoes *amator*, of Panthus, in *l*.4; and *domi* (Panthus' house), *l*.8, is picked up by *domo* (Jason's house), *l*.12.

In this instance we find Propertius actually tinkering with the myths he uses, to make them chime exactly with the situation he is illustrating. There is no need to call this procedure 'loose', as Camps does.[78] The possibility that the poet is using sources now lost for his version of the myths can never be discounted. But even if there never were such sources, Propertius had as much right creatively to adapt myth for a specific purpose as did Pindar or the Greek tragedians, or Callimachus and Apollonius in the instances examined in Chapter 1, before him. In any case, in neither the Jason- nor the Odysseus-exemplum does the poet alter the main lines of the story; he simply adjusts details for the purpose outlined above.

The next elegy in the second book, II,22A, presents two significant uses of mythology: an isolated exemplum at 19 f. and an exempla-series in lines 25-34. The entire elegy is very Ovidian in tone - it is in fact

---

77. This would be the significance of *sic est elusa Calypso*, line 13. Of course in the *Odyssey* Calypso knows that Odysseus is married.

78. See his comment on II,21,13-14: 'This is an instructive example of the loose way in which Propertius brings in his mythological parallels; for all readers of the *Odyssey* know ...' etc.

imitated by Ovid, *Am.*II, 4; I,9; and II,10 - and it is noteworthy that the exempla introduced into the poem by Propertius partake of the flippant witty tone of the whole.

The first use of myth, in 19 f., is of the type discussed in section (i) of this chapter. The mythological reference depends on knowledge of who Thamyras was and what his fate was, for its full appreciation. Propertius, depending on this knowledge in his readers, here uses the reference to Thamyras as a sort of shorthand. By *me licet et Thamyrae cantoris fata sequantur* the poet means simply 'though I should be blinded'. The use of this particular myth, however, lends a resonance to the line which another myth could not. As *cantoris* within the exemplum indicates, Thamyras was a bard, like Propertius. The comparison is thus with a blind *poet*, rather than with just any hero.

In the pentameter, *numquam ad formosas, inuide, caecus ero* (*l.*20), Propertius plays with the ambiguity of the idea contained in *caecus*, introduced by the Thamyras-exemplum. It is clear that the poet intends *l.*20 to mean both 'though physically blind I could still see lovely girls' (a conceit), and 'I shall never not have eyes for a pretty girl' (idiomatic).

The four lines that follow (21-4) leading up to the exempla-series in 25 ff., contain the idea developed by the series. Propertius; addressing Demophoon, says that he (the poet) may appear frail, but Demophoon would be wrong to attribute this to the effects of love-making; in fact love-making has never cost him much effort (21 f.). In the next couplet (23 f.), to dispel any lingering doubts, the poet tells his interlocutor that girls have often had his services throughout the night (the implication, of course, being that love-making does not exhaust him).

The reason why Propertius adds this further proof of his prowess in this particular form, becomes clear when we examine the first exemplum of the series in

25 ff.; we then see that he has presented his 'personal' experience in just such a manner as will accord exactly with the myth which illustrates it. The first couplet of the Jupiter-exemplum -

> Iuppiter Alcmenae geminas requieuerat Arctos,
> et caelum noctu bis sine rege fuit (II,22A,25 f.)

- shows us the god in a situation very like that in which the poet has just represented himself. (The parallel is strengthened by a verbal echo, *noctu* in *l*.26 picking up *nocte* in *l*.24.) The only difference is that Jupiter gave Alcmene his services for *two* whole nights. But: *nec tamen idcirco languens ad fulmina uenit* (27). Needless to say, this latter circumstance is an invention of Propertius' wit. It is tacked on to the well-known story of Jupiter's lengthy *concubitus* with Alcmene, as the conclusion to an *a fortiori* argument. If Jupiter lay with Alcmene for *two* whole nights, yet still had plenty of energy left to hurl the thunderbolts, how much more (*a fortiori*) should Propertius have strength left after only *one* night of love.[79]

The next two exempla, in *ll*.29-32, are not so directly linked to the poet's experience as the first, but they make the same general point: that love-making does not drain all a man's energy. Achilles left Briseis' arms to hurl his spears at the Phrygians; Hector rose from his marriage-bed to threaten the Greek ships. In the couplet -

> ille uel hic classis poterant uel perdere muros:
> hic ego Pelides, hic ferus Hector ego. (II,22A,33 f.)

- Propertius playfully applies the point made by these two exempla to his own experience. By the rather vague *hic* in *l*.34 Propertius must mean, 'As regards the whole business of love leaving energy over'. It is in *this* respect that he is an Achilles and a Hector. Thus Propertius has proved what he set out to prove to

---

79. I would put the next line, 28, in round brackets. It does not present a true conclusion to the poet's line of thought so far, but constitutes rather an incidental comment, an aside, by the poet: 'Love does not exhaust the energy it needs for its own ends.'

Demophoon, that love-making does not drain him of energy.

As has already been noted, it is the poet's imagination that creates the significance of the first exemplum, by juxtaposing two aspects of Jupiter's activity unlikely to have been brought together within the mythological tradition. As far as the second exemplum is concerned, it is possible that Achilles' going into battle from Briseis' embrace was described in the post-Homeric epics or in Hellenistic poetry,[80] but the source may just as well lie in Propertius' humorous ingenuity. The third exemplum is clearly derived - via the distorting medium of the poet's wit, which has adapted the myth to his present purpose - from Homer *Iliad* Books VI and XIII.

Finally, in this section, it remains to discuss the connexion between myth and personal experience in elegy II,8. This elegy, and in particular the Haemon-exemplum, *ll.*21-4, has received much attention from commentators and critics. The unity of the whole and the relevance of the Haemon-exemplum have been doubted.[81] In my analysis of the relevant sections of the poem I shall show that the exemplum does have a specific function in its context, and I shall assume that the elegy is a unified whole, although its unity is obscured by the poet's somewhat bewildering leaps from one addressee to another.

One such leap occurs at *ll.*17 ff. In the preceding four lines Propertius had been addressing his girl; now he suddenly switches to self-address. The predominant thought in these lines is that he must die since he has

---

80. Thus Otto (*diss.cit.* n.3) p.26.

81. Butler and Barber divide the poem into three parts, but more recently Enk and Camps (rightly in my view) print it as a unit. Good discussions of the elegy are: W. Abel, *Die Anredeformen bei den römischen Elegikern*, diss. Berlin 1930, pp.46-50; P.J. Enk, 'The Unity of Some Elegies of Propertius', *Latomus* 15, 1956, 181-92; T.A. Suits, 'Mythology, Address, and Structure in Propertius 2.8', *TAPhA* 96, 1965, 427-37; G. Williams, *Tradition and Originality*, Oxford 1968, pp.476-8.

lost his girl (as we learn from the opening lines of the poem). Let her then persecute his shade and insult his dead body! It is at this point that the mythological exemplum is introduced:

> quid? non Antigonae tumulo Boeotius Haemon
> corruit ipse suo saucius ense latus,
> et sua cum miserae permiscuit ossa puellae,
> qua sine Thebanam noluit ire domum? (II,8,21-4)

It has been maintained by some editors that Propertius' choice of myth here is inept, that the story of Haemon and Antigone has little in common with that of Propertius and Cynthia.[82] It is true that the whole tale of Haemon and Antigone does not very closely resemble that of the poet and his girl. But clearly in this case the poet means us to concentrate only on those details of the myth which he presents here and which *are* relevant to his and Cynthia's experience. With regard to the lines preceding the introduction of the exemplum, only the details 'Boeotius Haemon corruit ipse suo saucius ense latus' (21 f.) and *sine (puella) Thebanam noluit ire domum* (24), are relevant. Haemon killed himself because he lost the girl he loved; just so Propertius intends to kill himself for the same reason. Haemon's suicide is thus both an illustration and a justification of the poet's proposed course of action.

But in the exemplum Propertius tells us not only of Haemon's death. He adds the further details *Antigonae tumulo* (21) and *sua cum miserae permiscuit ossa puellae* (23). At first sight these details indicating that Antigone died before Haemon's suicide, seem to have little to do with the situation of the elegy as outlined so far. But this is simply because mention of Antigone's death anticipates what follows the exemplum rather than illustrates what precedes it. Immediately after the lines containing the myth, Propertius addresses Cynthia once more and says:

---

82. E.g., Butler and Barber. Editorial opinion through the centuries on II,8,21-4 is conveniently assembled by C. Saylor, *Propertius and Main Themes of Roman Amatory Thought*, diss. Berkeley 1968, pp.222-3.

sed non effugies: mecum moriaris oportet;
hoc eodem ferro stillet uterque cruor. (II,8,25 f.)

In this couplet Propertius expresses the thought which he has allowed the exemplum to suggest. Antigone died before Haemon committed suicide, even so Cynthia must die before Propertius does away with himself: he himself will kill her. The extent to which the poet lets the exemplum determine the thought of the lines following it may be seen also in the mention of the weapon by which he (and his girl) will die - a sword (*ferro*, *l*.26), the very weapon (*ense*, *l*.22) with which Haemon killed himself.

The mythological illustration thus performs a transitional function in the elegy.[83] Due to the particular shape Propertius lends to the story of Haemon and Antigone, the exemplum is able equally to illustrate the idea of the poet's suicide which precedes it and to anticipate the idea of his girl's death, which follows.

It may be felt to be a difficulty of the interpretation advanced above that Antigone was not killed by Haemon as Cynthia is to be by Propertius. Now it is possible that Propertius was here thinking of a lesser-known version of the myth, reported by Hyginus, according to which 'Haemon se et Antigonam ... interfecit';[84] in which case the apparent difficulty would be resolved. But even if the poet was not thinking of this version of the myth, but of the well-known Sophoclean story, we ought not to feel a difficulty. Once again we must concentrate only on those details of the myth relevant to the case in hand. And all that is relevant here is that Antigone died before Haemon, an idea which suggests to Propertius that Cynthia shall die before him; that she shall die at his hand is a new thought stemming not from the exemplum but from his own heated imagination.

In the last section of II,8, *ll*.29-40, Propertius returns to the world of myth to relate how Achilles refused to fight, although he saw his comrades

---

83. This is pointed out by Allen (*op.cit.* n.2) p.138.
84. Hyginus, *Fabulae*, ch.72.

discomfited, until Briseis was resorted to him; such was the force of his passion. The connexion of this second exemplum with the poet's situation is clear: Propertius is prepared to suffer disgrace (in the form of a *mors inhonesta* (*bis*), 27 f.) at the prompting of his passion, just as Achilles was prepared to do. If this, however, were the sole connexion between myth and the experience of the poet, we would rightly regard the exemplum as excessively long and discursive. But in fact the myth of Achilles illustrates not just its immediate context but also the situation of the opening section of the poem, *ll*.1-12.[85]

Although *ll*.29-40 and 1-12 are separated by some 16 lines of text, there is a strong reason why we should be prepared to find connexions between these sections of the poem. The reason is that II,8 has a very marked symmetrical structure - 12 lines + 4 + 8 + 4 + 12 - the symmetry of which is reinforced by the fact that the two twelve-line sections are addressed to a friend, the two four-line sections are addressed to Propertius' girl, while the central eight-line section is self-address.[86] It therefore comes as no surprise to find that the content of *ll*.29-40 is linked with that of 1-12 in ways now to be described.

In the first place, the situations of Propertius and of Achilles as outlined in the opening and closing sections of the poem respectively, are virtually identical. Both have seen the girl they love taken over by another; *abrepta coniuge* (*l*.29) and *erepto amore* (*l*.36), of Achilles, pick up *eripitur nobis cara puella* (*l*.1) of the poet. Thus Propertius' motive for adducing the Achilles-exemplum in 29-42 becomes clear when we realise, from a re-examination of the opening

---

85. The connexion between 29-40 and 1-12 seems first to have been noted by U. Knoche, in a review of Butler and Barber's *Propertius* (*Gnomon* 12, 1936, 260-72, pp.267 f.). *Cf.* also Suits (*art.cit.* n.81) pp.434-6.

86. For the structure of II,8 and the balance of addressees, see the introductory note to the elegy in Camps' edition.

section of the poem, that his own experience was so very similar to that of the hero. Second, the Achilles-exemplum seems to me to provide support for what Propertius affirms in *ll.*7 f. of the elegy:

> omnia uertuntur: certe uertuntur amores:
> uinceris aut uincis, haec in amore rota est.

Two ideas are expressed here: the idea of mutability in general, and the idea of mutability in love. The first of these ideas is illustrated by the immediately following couplet -

> magni saepe duces, magni cecidere tyranni,
> et Thebae steterant altaque Troia fuit. (II,8,9 f.)

- while the second is exemplified by the poet's own case as described in the opening section of the elegy. In the closing section of the poem, through the complex form in which he casts the myth, Propertius enables the Achilles-exemplum to illustrate *both* sorts of mutability at once. Again, as in *l.*10, the fortunes of Troy (this time as embodied in the person of Hector) represent the mutability of things in general, while the vicissitudes of Achilles'love-life graphically illustrate the changeability of love. Propertius skilfully weaves both these strands together into a single story. Achilles was deprived of his beloved: Hector nearly took the Greek camp by storm and slew Patroclus; Achilles regained his beloved: the once-proud Hector was dragged through the dust. In Propertius' retelling of the *Iliad*, the wheels of love and fortune are made to turn with a single motion.

The happy outcome of Achilles' story, the fact that his Briseis is restored to him, leads us to expect an equally happy outcome in Propertius' case. But there is an ironic sting in the tail of the poem. As if conscious of the expectation he has aroused in his readers, Propertius concludes the elegy with a couplet which defeats that expectation:

> inferior multo cum sim uel matre uel armis,
> mirum, si de me iure triumphat Amor? (II,8,39 f.)

He is not Achilles' equal; love continues to triumph

over him (i.e. he will not have his Cynthia restored to him). As in the case of the Milanion-exemplum,[87] so here, Propertius is at pains to point out that his experience departs from the mythological norm. The success of the hero of myth serves, not to strengthen his own case, but to demonstrate its hopelessness.

(iii) Mixed Exempla

In the first two sections of this chapter we have examined two categories of exempla: first, exempla where Propertius presupposed on his readers' part a knowledge of the mythological characters involved and of their history and background; second, exempla where the actual mythological characters dealt with were of secondary importance, and what mattered more was the way in which the poet shaped the exempla and what he chose to tell us about the heroes or heroines concerned. The present third and final section of this chapter will deal with mythological examples which are at home in both of the above categories. In the exempla presently to be examined neither the particular associations of the heroes and heroines mentioned, nor the way in which Propertius tells their story, takes precedence. Now the reader must be fully aware of who the mythological characters of these exempla are and what their history is, but he must be equally aware of the individual manner in which their story is told.

The situation reflected in elegy II,9 appears to be continuous with that of the elegy last dealt with, II,8. So much can be deduced from the opening couplet:

> Iste quod est, ego saepe fui: sed fors et in hora
> hoc ipso eiecto carior alter erit. (II,9,1 f.)

The poet, as in II,8, must still be content to see Cynthia favour a rival above himself. Two substantial exempla are then introduced (*ll*.3-16) preceding an outline of the poet's unhappy experience, which they serve to illumine. Before we go on to examine the way in which Propertius shapes this pair of mythological

---

87. See above, pp.140 ff.

examples, something must be said about the heroines who are its subjects.

It is relevant, in this instance, that precisely Penelope and Briseis with their history of devotion and fidelity, each to one man, are used as examples by the poet. Their proverbial faithfulness alone, apart from anything Propertius chooses to tell us about them, suffices to place them in the sharpest possible contrast to the poet's Cynthia. The lines immediately following the exempla make explicit this contrast. A neat couplet -

> tunc igitur ueris gaudebat Graecia nuptis,[88]
> tunc etiam felix inter et arma pudor. (II,9,17 f.)

- which puts the point of the exempla in a nutshell (the hexameter picks up the reference to Penelope's fidelity, the pentameter that to Briseis') is juxtaposed straightaway with a scathing attack on Cynthia's faithlessness (*ll*.19 ff.).

This simple aspect of the exempla, the proverbial faithfulness of Penelope and Briseis to their respective partners, remains in Propertius' mind as the poem proceeds, only to re-emerge at *ll*.29 f. As he asks the question framed by this couplet, the poet seems to return to the thought of *ll*.19 f., where we learned that Cynthia could not remain true to him even for a day and a night. Now he adds:

> quid si longinquos retinerer miles ad Indos,
> aut mea si staret nauis in Oceano? (II,9,29 f.)

What if he were a soldier fighting in the East (like Achilles) or if (like Odysseus) his ship were out on the sea? The clear implication of this questios is a further question: Would Cynthia, in that case, be as faithful as Penelope was to her man, or Briseis to hers?

Propertius' concern to mould myth and the experience it illustrates, so that they are mutually compatible, may clearly be seen from a comparison of the Penelope-exemplum (*ll*.3-8) with the lines (19 ff.) following the exempla, dealing with Cynthia's behaviour. Of Odysseus' wife Propertius tells us:

> Penelope poterat bis denos salua per annos
> uiuere, tam multis femina digna procis;
> coniugium falsa poterat differre Minerua,
> nocturno sŏluens texta diurna dolo;

---

88. I accept Baehrens' *nuptis* here (for the *natis* of the manuscripts) as it preserves the symmetry of reference noted in the parenthesis immediately below in my text.

uisura et quamuis numquam speraret Vlixem,
illum exspectando facta remansit anus. (II,9,3-8)

It is curious that, at *ll.*19 ff., the poet ignores the Briseis-exemplum which has immediately preceded, and refers back directly to these lines involving Penelope. *Penelope poterat ... poterat* (*ll.*3;5) is picked up by what Propertius now scornfully says to Cynthia: *at tu non potuisti* (19). Moreover the extended period of Penelope's fidelity is contrasted with Cynthia's immediate faithlessness: the heroine was able *bis denos salua per annos uiuere* (3 f.), but the poet's girl was unable *una nocte uacare ... unum sola manere diem* (19 f.). And the chaste occupations of Penelope's days and nights, her weaving and unpicking of the web (5 f.), contrast with Cynthia's unchastity by day and by night (19 f.), her drinking and (the poet suspects) her slandering of him (21 f.). Thus the Penelope-exemplum and the lines describing Cynthia's activities are shaped in such a way that they correspond detail for detail.

The same cannot be said of the Briseis-exemplum:

nec non exanimem amplectens Briseis Achillem
candida uesana uerberat ora manu;
et dominum lauit maerens captiua cruentum,
propositum flauis in Simoente uadis,
foedauitque comas, et tanti corpus Achilli
maximaque in parua sustulit ossa manu;
cum tibi nec Peleus aderat nec caerula mater,
Scyria nec uiduo Deidamia toro. (II,9,9-16)

Propertius has evidently lavished a considerable degree of artistry upon these lines,[89] and yet he makes no direct connexion whatsoever between Briseis and Cynthia, as he does between the latter and Penelope. What then are we to make of the Briseis-exemplum? In a recent article C.W. Macleod has discussed the use by certain ancient poets (among them Propertius) of myth to express

---

89. Rothstein, *ad loc.*, points out that three distinct moments may be discerned in Briseis' devotion: 1) immediately after Achilles' death (9 f.); 2) during the preparation of the body for the funeral; 3) after the cremation. And strongly visual elements in the exemplum, possibly inspired by works of art, are noted by A. La Penna, *Properzio*, Florence 1951, p.105 and J.-P. Boucher (*op.cit.* n.12) p.265.

a fantasy of the poet's.[90] This, it seems to me, is a useful category within which to examine the present exemplum. Seen in this light the exemplum gives substance to the poet's dream, so often mentioned by him, that Cynthia may be faithful to him even after his death. Hence all the details, stressing Briseis' faithfulness and the pathos of her situation, that Propertius works into the exemplum; the devoted loving attentions the heroine pays to the dead Achilles are, in Propertius' fantasy, attentions that Cynthia would pay to him in death. The Briseis-exemplum then is pure wish-fulfilment; through it Propertius expresses what would be the behaviour towards him, when he should have died, of an ideal Cynthia in an ideal world.[91]

In the thirteenth elegy of Book I, at *ll.*21 ff., Propertius introduces two exempla illustrative of the force of his friend Gallus' passion for his beloved. The poet tells us, in the lines leading up to the examples, that he was the witness of Gallus' passion (13 ff.) and he concludes:

> non ego complexus potui diducere uestros:
> tantus erat demens inter utrosque furor. (I,13,19 f.)

Next, by means of the now familiar *non sic* formula,[92] Propertius brings in episodes from myth to illustrate (by contrast) the thought of this couplet:

> non sic Haemonio Salmonida mixtus Enipeo
> Taenarius facili pressit amore deus,
> nec sic caelestem flagrans amor Herculis Heben
> sensit in Oetaeis gaudia prima iugis. (I,13,21-4)

The two stories related here would, just on their own,

---

90. C.W. Macleod, 'A Use of Myth in Ancient Poetry', *CQ* XXIV 1974, 82-93.

91. Elements of fantasy and wish-fulfilment in the Briseis-exemplum are noticed already by Kölmel. He comments: 'Was (Properz) so oft von Cynthia wünscht, erfüllt Briseis an Achill' (*diss.cit.* n.5) p.124; and again: 'Was Cynthia für Properz sein sollte, das ist Briseis für Achill: sola domus, sola parentes' (p.125).

92. Used to introduce exempla at I,15,9; 17, and at I,2,15 (see above, pp.136 and 145).

be sufficient to make the poet's point.[93] No doubt mutual passion characterised the embraces of Poseidon and Tyro, and of Hercules and his divine consort. To this extent the elegist is simply relying on our knowledge of the myths concerned. But, having observed so much, we have by no means exhausted the significance of the exempla. We need to observe further the various ways in which Propertius has ensured that the examples and their surrounding context are closely integrated, the one with the other.

To take *ll.*21 f. first: Propertius sees to it that the exemplum here conveys the idea not only of the passion of Gallus and his girl for each other, but also of the closeness of their embrace, as described in *l.*19. This closeness is suggested by the reference to Neptune's mingling with Enipeus (the curious expression *mixtus Enipeo*, *l.*21, seems deliberately to be chosen to suggest the idea of fusion between two bodies). And closeness is suggested again by the very word-order of the couplet containing the mythological episode, with its complex interlocking pattern of nouns, epithets and attributive phrases.

The second of the two exempla, involving Hercules and Hebe, is shaped by the poet in such a way as to exhibit allusive links with the section of the elegy which follows it. But before examining these links, we must look at the exemplum itself. Commentators have been uneasy about the poet's version of the myth, according to which Hercules tasted the first-fruits of love with Hebe already on Mt. Oeta where he was cremated.[94] But Propertius' casting of the myth in this form is deliberate; it is in order to bring into conjunction the ideas of burning heat and of passion. The elegist

---

93. Since the first of these stories is somewhat unfamiliar the details should perhaps be given: Tyro, daughter of Salmoneus, was in love with the river Enipeus; so Poseidon (Taenarius), who was in love with Tyro, assumed the appearance of Enipeus and thus contrived to lie with her (see Homer, *Od.*XI, 235 ff.).

94. See Enk's comment on 24.

is suggesting that Hercules' love of Hebe was *literally* a 'flaming passion' (*flagrans amor*, *l*.23), that the hero began to feel it even as he burned on his funeral pyre on Mt. Oeta. These associations aroused by the exemplum are then picked up in the lines immediately following, addressed to Gallus. When in *l*.26 Propertius says to his friend, *nam tibi non tepidas subdidit illa faces*, he employs by design an expression (*subdere faces*) commonly used of firing a funeral pyre.[95] Gallus' fate is thus assimilated to that of Hercules; he too, like the hero, must 'burn with love' (though in this instance only figuratively).[96] And a further allusion back to the exemplum is to be found in the fire-metaphor of *te tuus ardor aget* (*l*.28) addressed to Gallus, recalling Hercules' fiery love for Hebe.[97]

Myth is used in a similar fashion again in I,19,7-10, where Propertius briefly and allusively tells the story of Protesilaus' return from the underworld. As in the other instances examined so far in this section, so here, Propertius expects us to know who Protesilaus was and the details of his history; but at the same time he presents that history in a very particular form, whereby it clearly displays points of contact with his own experience. However, before analysing the exemplum, we must look at its context in the elegy.

The first four lines of I,19 deal with Propertius' fear that Cynthia may spurn him when he is dead. This fear, the poet says to her, is greater than his fear of death itself. Then, by way of contrast, he tells Cynthia

---

95. The expression is so used, e.g., in Prop.IV,11, 9 f.: 'cum subdita nostrum/detraheret lecto fax inimica caput' and Lucr.VI, 1285: *subdebantque faces* (*sc. rogis*).

96. The connexion was noted already by Kuinoel. He comments on *l*.26 '*subdidit faces* i. haud tepidos ignes sub pectore sentis ... Perquam significanter scripsit poeta *subdidit faces*, cum antea de Herculis rogo verba fecerit.'

97. I now see that Steele Commager, *A Prolegomenon to Propertius*, Cincinnati 1974, pp.13-16, interprets the Hercules-exemplum in a way similar to mine.

what his own very different attitude to her is:

> non adeo leuiter nostris puer haesit ocellis,
> ut meus oblito puluis amore uacet. (I,19,5 f.)

The thought of this couplet, that he would still love her even in death, prompts the introduction of the exemplum:

> illic Phylacides iucundae coniugis heros
> non potuit caecis immemor esse locis,
> sed cupidus falsis attingere gaudia palmis
> Thessalus antiquam uenerat umbra domum. (I,19,7-10)

Suddenly, with *illic*, we find ourselves in the underworld.[98] Propertius takes it for granted that we know the myth: that Protesilaus (Phylacides) went down to the underworld, but was allowed to return for a short while to his wife, Laodamia (the *iucundae coniugis* of *l*.7). With this knowledge in mind we see clearly the parallel with the elegist's experience. Propertius' love, like that of Protesilaus, will not end in death; he will love even from beyond the grave.

It is not generally remarked by commentators and critics that Propertius has, for his own purposes, used a rare variant of the myth here.[99] In the best-known versions of the myth, all the emphasis is on *Laodamia's great love for Protesilaus*; and it is as a result of *her* inconsolable passion that the gods allow the hero briefly to be returned from the dead; in these versions we hear nothing about his feelings for his wife. In Propertius' account, however, as we have just seen, it is *Protesilaus'* restless longing for his spouse that brings him back from the underworld. The elegist's

---

98. The jump in thought represented by *illic* is noted by Gordon Williams in his detailed analysis of I,19 (*Tradition and Originality*, Oxford 1968, pp.766-74). He writes: 'The passage (7-18) is organised around the triple anaphora of *illic*, which makes a sudden - though not unexpected - transition to the world beyond the grave and is used here as the Greeks used ἐκεῖ.' (p.769) Besides the Greek ἐκεῖ Propertius may also have been thinking here of Tibullus' threefold repetition of *illic* in *his* description of the underworld in I,3,65-82 (see above, Chapter 3, pp.88 ff.

99. An exception must be made of Steele Commager (*op. cit.* n.97) pp.19 f.

reason for adopting a version of the myth with just this emphasis is obvious: it is in order that Protesilaus' story may the more exactly illustrate his own.[100]

The correspondences in detail between the exemplum and its context may now be noted. The idea that Propertius could never forget his Cynthia (*cf. oblito amore*, *l.*6) is picked up by what he tells us of Protesilaus (*non potuit immemor esse*, *l.*8). Then, critics note the deliberate paradox in the thought of line 6, the thought that the poet will be able to love even when he is mere dust;[101] we feel a striking contrast between the vivid reality of his passion and the insubstantial remains which experience that passion. Propertius creates a very similar contrast within the exemplum when he says that Protesilaus 'cupidus falsis attingere gaudia palmis ... uenerat umbra domum' (9 f.). Here too the hero's very real passion contrasts with his shadowy ghostly form, and the same paradox as in the poet's case makes itself felt.

In the lines following the exemplum Propertius interprets the myth in a slightly different sense. Picking up *illic* (*l.*7) and *umbra* (*l.*10) he writes:

> *illic* quidquid ero, semper tua dicar *imago*:
> traicit et fati litora magnus amor. (I,19,11 f.)

When the poet says here that 'a great love crosses the shores of death', he is clearly thinking of Protesilaus' story, which he has just related. But he seems now to conceive of the hero as a model of posthumous faithfulness rather than passion. In the same way he, Propertius,

---

100. For the various versions of the myth of Laodamia and Protesilaus, besides the standard mythological handbooks, see Enk, on *l.*7, who quotes *in extenso* from the sources; also G. Lieberg, *Puella Divina* ..., Amsterdam 1962, pp.209 ff., where the myth is fully discussed in connexion with Catullus LXVIII. Propertius' unusual version, emphasizing Protesilaus' desire to return to Laodamia, may be traced back to a lost tragedy, *Protesilaus*, by Euripides (see Lieberg, *ibid.*, p.212 with nn.174-6).

101. See Hubbard, *op.cit.*, pp.35 f.: 'When Propertius speaks of bones, dust, embers, our attention should be fixed on physical remains; that these can love and be loved is the extreme paradox of love ...'; also Williams, *op.cit.*, p.768.

will be faithful to Cynthia in death, he will be called 'her shade' and none of the famous heroines of myth will tempt him (lines 11 and 13-16). Here the elegist has exploited the advantage offered by an exemplum involving characters who act in purely human ways. Because human actions are never simple, but may be interpreted in more than one way, Propertius is able to introduce Protesilaus' story to illustrate one train of thought, and then to allow it to suggest a slightly different sequence of ideas in the lines that follow. In this way he uses the exemplum in part as a structural device, to effect a smooth transition from one part of the elegy to the other.

The fear Propertius expresses in I,19, that Cynthia may spurn him once he is dead, recurs in II,13.[102] It emerges in *ll.*39 ff., after the poet has given Cynthia various detailed instructions for the arrangements at his funeral and the appointments of his tomb (17-38). Now he tells her to make sure that she cultivates his grave when she is old (39 f.), and declares:

> interea caue sis nos aspernata sepultos:
> non nihil ad uerum conscia terra sapit. (II,13,41 f.)

In the immediately following three lines the elegist brings in a new thought; we find him now wishing he had died at birth, and asking to what purpose his life has been prolonged:

> atque utinam primis animam me ponere cunis
> iussisset quaeuis de Tribus una Soror!
> nam quo tam dubiae seruetur spiritus horae? (II,13,43-5)

We should note that there is here a thought in the poet's mind which remains unexpressed, namely, that the circumstances of his life have been too miserable to warrant his living and that the prolongation of his life means only a prolongation of his misery.

At this point Propertius introduces an exemplum:

---

102. I regard II,13 as a single elegy, against the *OCT* which divides it in two. The unity of the poem seems to me to have been established conclusively by L.P. Wilkinson, 'The Continuity of Propertius ii.13', *CR* 16, 1966, 141-5.

Nestoris est uisus post tria saecla cinis:
cui si longaeuae minuisset fata senectae
† Gallicus † Iliacis miles in aggeribus,
non ille Antilochi uidisset corpus humari,
diceret aut 'O mors, cur mihi sera uenis?' (II,13,46-50)

Initially the function of the mythological illustration is to reinforce Propertius' rhetorical question in the hexameter, *l*.45: 'To what end is so uncertain a thing as life extended?'. As the pentameter, *l*.46, points out: 'Even the long-lived Nestor had to die.' But thereafter the exemplum suddenly changes direction. It now serves to extend the thought of the poem by making explicit, in terms of myth, what was only implicit before. In *ll*.43-5, as we saw, Propertius expressed the wish that his life had been cut short, the implication being that this life had been full of misery. Now, in *ll*.47 ff. of the exemplum, by leaving aside Nestor's longevity and focussing on a different aspect of his experience, the poet is able to make explicit, and to develop, this implied thought. He suggests that had Nestor's long span of years been cut short earlier, the misery of the old man's life would have been the less; he would not have seen his son die, nor would he have had to mourn him. In Nestor's case, as in Propertius', prolongation of life has meant prolongation of misery.

The foregoing analysis has still not exhausted the significance of this extremely subtle and economic exemplum. For it not only serves to illustrate, and to make explicit the implication of, the lines that precede it, but also smooths the transition to the following couplet (51 f.), which leads into the conclusion of the poem. In these two lines the poet now desires that Cynthia should faithfully mourn him once he is dead, whereas previously (in *ll*.41 f.) he had feared that she might be unfaithful and spurn his grave. What suggests this new idea of mourning, is the particular unhappy circumstance of Nestor's life that the elegist has presented in the exemplum in order to make his point, namely, the death of Antilochus. By fixing on just *this* circumstance, Propertius is able to bring before

our minds the idea of someone mourning a loved one and thus to prepare the way for the idea of Cynthia mourning him.[103]

In the Nestor-exemplum of II,13 Propertius takes advantage of a feature of myth to which J.-P. Boucher has drawn attention. The latter writes (of the figures of mythology):

> 'Ces personnages, leurs aventures, en plus du rôle que leur confie le poète, conservent leur vie propre, une certaine indépendance ...'[104]

Boucher is here concerned with those occasions on which Propertius seems to develop exempla beyond the limits of their relevance to the poem in which they occur. But there are also occasions when, as in II,13, Propertius deliberately exploits this fact of a mythological character's *indépendance* in order to develop the thought of an elegy. In the present instance Propertius exploits the fact that Nestor was more than simply a hero who was proverbial for his longevity. The poet is aware that Nestor also had a son, who died in battle and for whom the old man mourned; and he takes full advantage of this material in order to achieve his poetic purpose. This purpose has a number of different aspects, each represented, as has been shown, by a different aspect of the exemplum. Yet for all its variety the exemplum is perfectly unified by the figure of Nestor, whose manifold experience is its subject.

The next series of exempla to be considered, like the other exempla examined so far in this section, combines both careful wording and selection of detail together with the significance of the mythological characters mentioned, in order to illustrate the poet's experience. The series occurs in the latter half of

---

103. *Cf.* Kölmel: '... da steht im Bild des toten Antilochus ihm schon sein *eigener* Leichnam vor Augen, um den Cynthia klagen soll.' (*diss.cit.* n.5) p.121 (his emphasis).

104. J.-P. Boucher (*op.cit.* n.12) p.256.

II,30 [105] where Propertius, having expressed the wish that Cynthia may retreat with him to the mountains, says to her:

> illic aspicies scopulis haerere Sorores
> et canere antiqui dulcia furta Iouis,
> ut Semela est combustus, ut est deperditus Io,
> denique ut ad Troiae tecta uolarit auis. (II,30,27-30)

A couple of lines before the introduction of the examples, Propertius asks rhetorically whether he should be ashamed of spending his life with one girl. If this is a crime then Amor is the guilty party (23 f.). And following the examples comes the thought that Amor is actually irresistible. Thus *all* are culpable, though the poet alone is blamed (31 f.).

The transition between these two ideas, before and after the mythological exempla, is effected by lines 27-30 where Propertius tells Cynthia she will see the Muses singing of the *dulcia furta Iouis* (28). Boucher cites these lines as an example of 'la liberté de développement' which Propertius often allows himself in his mythological exempla.[106] But in fact every line in this section is, as we shall see, strictly relevant to its context in the poem.

In the first place, the word *furta* here, implying as it does the illicit nature of Jove's amours, picks up the legal metaphors of lines 24 (*cf. crimen ... crimen*) and 32 (*cf. communis* culpae *cur* reus *unus* agor?) preceding and following the exempla, representing love as a crime. Second, the stories of Semele and Io in 29 do more than simply furnish inert illustrations of Jove's *furta*. The reader knows that in Io's case and even more so in Semele's, an overwhelming love, that of

---

105. The *OCT* prints II,30 as two elegies, but I regard it as a single unit. Convincing arguments for unity are advanced by N.-O. Nilsson, 'Zu Erklärung von Properz II,30', *Eranos* 45, 1947, 37-58; F. Cairns, 'Propertius, 2.30 A and B', *CQ* 65, 1971, 204-13; and recently by A. La Penna (*op.cit.* n.9) pp.146-51.

106. *Op.cit.*, p.256, n.1.

Zeus, brought drastic results: Io was metamorphosed, Semele was blasted by lightning. (Although in the exempla it is *their* effect on Jove which is mentioned, one cannot help feeling that Propertius meant to suggest their fates by the words *combustus* and *deperditus* which he applied to Jove.) In fact the Muses sing not directly of Jove's *furta*, but how he, King of the Gods though he was, was inflamed with love of two women. The very strong words *combustus* and *deperditus* serve to emphasize the idea of Love's overwhelming might. Finally, the allustion to Jove's rape of Ganymede in *l*.30, by introducing a homosexual love in addition to the heterosexual amours of *l*.29, further emphasizes Love's all-embracing power.

Thus the Muses' song is clearly not just an otiose elaboration of the poem. By means of the word *furta*, as we have just seen, the elegist links the exempla to both what precedes and what follows. Furthermore, the illustrations of Love's power afforded by the song provide the justification for Propertius' conclusion in 31 f.:

> quod si nemo exstat qui uicerit Alitis arma,
> communis culpae cur reus unus agor?[107] (II,30,31 f.)

The implication of the mythological illustrations is, in typical Propertian fashion, left implicit, but it is presupposed by his conclusion here: 'If therefore no one has ever been able to resist Love (the implication being that no one could because even the greatest of the gods, as we have seen, could not) why am I alone charged with a crime that is common?' The Muses' song thus functions dynamically in the elegy, providing a link with the thought that precedes it, and material for the conclusion that follows.

The use of mythological exempla to exonerate alleged erotic transgressions occurs again in elegy

---

107. Butler and Barber, *comm.ad loc.*, aptly compare *A.P.*V, 100, in particular lines 5 f.: εἰ δὲ θεοὶ τοιοίδε, θεοῖς δ' ἐνέπουσιν ἕπεσθαι/ἀνθρώπους, τί θεῶν ἔργα μαθὼν ἀδικῶ;

II,32,31-40 and 57-60. We shall be concerned mainly with the exempla in 31 ff., but shall also touch briefly on those in 57 ff.

Just before the halfway-point of II,32, Propertius suddenly changes his tone. Up to *l*.24 he has been chiding Cynthia for her infidelity, more in sorrow than in anger, but thereafter he seeks no longer to blame but rather to palliate her offences. From *l*.25 on the elegist's train of thought is as follows: 'Beauty is always the subject of gossip; it's not as if you'd done anything really serious; perhaps you have been unfaithful but such peccadilloes don't worry me' (25-30). It is this last idea, contained in 29 f., that a woman's infidelity to her partner is not particularly blameworthy, that is illustrated by the exempla:

> Tyndaris externo patriam mutauit amore,
> et sine decreto uiua reducta domum est.
> ipsa Venus fertur corrupta libidine Martis,
> nec minus in caelo semper honesta fuit,
> quamuis Ida *etiam* pastorem dicat amasse
> atque inter pecudes accubuisse deam;
> hoc et Hamadryadum spectauit turba sororum
> Silenique senes et pater ipse chori,
> cum quibus Idaeo legisti poma sub antro,
> subposita excipiens, Nai, caduca manu.[108] (II,32,31-40)
>
> 35 parim *O* : etiam *Enk*

Before we go on to look at the content of the examples, a word about their form. It is noteworthy that the

---

108. I here adopt Enk's text and punctuation according to which 35-40 deal with a further adulterous love of Venus, this time for Anchises (the *pastor* of line 35). Two other interpretations of 35-40 are possible. 1) A love of Paris and Venus is referred to, and *Parim* must be retained in 35. (This is the interpretation adopted by Kölmel (*diss.cit.* n.5) p.15). The main difficulty of this interpretation is that nowhere else in ancient literature are we told of such a love. 2) The reference is to the love of Paris and Oenone, and *Parim* must again be kept, with a full-stop being placed after 34. (Most recently, Camps adopts this interpretation.) A serious objection to this, *pace* Camps, is that there was nothing irregular about the relationship between Paris and Oenone, they were respectably married. Accordingly, their story would not illustrate the poet's point. (This is noted by Housman in a review of Butler's *Propertius*, *CR* 19, 1905, 317-20, p.319.)

manner in which the examples are presented follows closely the pattern of the lines preceding them, to which they refer. In *ll.*17-24 (and more diffusely in 1-16) Propertius first indicates what Cynthia has done wrong, and then in 25-30 makes light of her offence and exonerates her. This is just the pattern - specification of an offence, followed by its exoneration - which the poet lends to the mythic illustrations. In the first two exempla the hexameter specifies what the particular mythological character has done wrong, while the pentameter palliates her misdemeanour; and in the third, much longer, exemplum, it is the opening couplet that outlines the amorous offence, while the second couplet demonstrates its unimportance.

As regards content, the Helen-exemplum is, of all the three exempla, the most closely connected with its context by means of allusive links. Propertius deliberately chooses the words *externo patriam mutauit amore* (31) to describe Helen's infidelity, in order that she may afford a very close parallel to Cynthia. The heroine 'left home for an "outside" love' - and this is precisely what the poet has accused Cynthia of in the earlier part of the elegy. The charge is most explicit in 17 f.:

> falleris, ista tui furtum uia monstrat amoris:
> non urbem, demens, lumina nostra fugis!

Thus Helen's infidelity, as presented by Propertius, affords an excellent illustration of Cynthia's conduct. But there are links also between the terms in which the poet exonerates the two ladies. The language Propertius uses to make light of Cynthia's offences is consistently the language of law. In 27-30 we find *damnata*, *testis*, *crimina*, while right at the end of the elegy Propertius says to his girl: *semper uiue meo libera iudicio* (62). So also, in talking of Helen's failure to be condemned, the elegist uses legal terminology: *et sine decreto uiua reducta domum est* (32). The precise technical significance of *sine decreto* in this context is not

known,[109] but it is quite obviously the terminology of the lawcourts.[110] Thus in describing both Helen's wrongdoing and her acquittal, Propertius sees to it that she provides as close as possible an illustration of Cynthia's experience.

The second and third exempla illustrate only in a general way what the poet says about his girl; there are not the same detailed points of correspondence that we found in the first. However, in just one small detail Propertius does seem later to refer back to this pair of examples. This is when, in *ll.*55 f., he asks of the time following Deucalion's flood:

> dic mihi, quis potuit lectum seruare pudicum,
> quae dea cum solo uiuere sola deo?

The idea of a goddess' infidelity contained in the pentameter of this couplet, has been anticipated by the account of Venus' infidelities in the mythological illustrations at *ll.*33 ff.

Finally, it should be noted that the exempla-series as a whole serves to ease the introduction of a new train of thought in the lines following it. Both before and after the examples Propertius is concerned to exonerate Cynthia from blame; but after the exempla-series he does so in a way different from before. Preceding the series, as we saw, Propertius simply made light of Cynthia's infidelities, saying that they were not anything serious (*ll.*25-30). But following the series he no longer says anything about the seriousness, or lack of it, of his girl's offences; now the poet's justification of Cynthia is that she is not the first to sin, many others have done so before her (*ll.*43 ff.). And it is the exempla-series, by providing a number of instances of prehistoric infidelity, that has prepared the way for this new idea. The fact that Helen and Venus erred

---

109. See Camps' note *ad loc.*

110. See Enk, *comm. ad loc.*: '*sine decreto* pertinet ad sermonem forensem, cf. Digesta Iustiniani XXVI, 9 *De rebus eorum qui sub tutela vel cura sunt*, sine decreto *non alienandis vel supponendis*'; also *OLD s.v. decretum* 3a.

long ago, suggests to the elegist the new line of defence which he pursues from *l*.43 onward. The difference between this line of defence and the one he pursued in 25 ff. is mirrored by the difference between the earlier set of exempla at 31 ff. and the straightforward pair at *ll*.57-60:

> uxorem quondam magni Minois, ut aiunt,
> corrupit torui candida forma bouis;
> nec minus aerato Danae circumdata muro
> non potuit magno casta negare Ioui. (II,32,57-60)

In the earlier exempla Propertius attempted in each case to palliate the misdemeanour of the female character involved, but in this pair of examples no such attempt is made. All that the poet is seeking to establish here, as *quondam* (*l*.57) indicates, is that long before Cynthia even great heroines were unchaste. The argument is one of a type we have encountered already:[111] 'If even the great X did this, how can we who are mere mortals be expected not to do likewise?'

---

111. At II,30,31 f.; and cp. II,8,39 f. (See above pp.168 and 155 f. respectively).

Chapter 5

OVID[1]

We may conveniently begin this chapter *in mediis rebus* by comparing Ovid's use of myth in two poems which are inspired (in part at least) by Propertian models, with Propertius' use of myth in those models. In making the comparison we must, however, be careful not to criticize Ovid's poetry and, more specifically, his use of myth, simply because it is unlike Propertius'. We must consider Ovid's employment of myth in the *Amores* on its own merits. The purpose of my comparison will be, to show in precisely what respects, and why, Ovid's treatment of myth is different from Propertius'; and where I criticize Ovid it will be in terms of his own, not Propertius' or anyone else's, poetic practice.

The first pair of poems to be compared with regard to their treatment of myth, is *Amores* II,12 and Propertius II,14.[2] The same situation is common to both elegies: the poet after much difficulty has finally succeeded in winning his mistress, a victory in love which he sees as greater than any military victory. But in Propertius' poem[3] this latter conceit has only a subordinate place; it is first suggested by the exemplum involving Agamemnon's conquest of Troy which opens the elegy and is then picked up once more at *ll.*23 ff., where the poet asserts that his love-triumph is greater

---

1. On Ovid's use of mythological exempla there is the thesis of H. Renz: *Mythologische Beispiele in Ovids erotischer Elegie*, diss. Tübingen 1931, published Würzburg 1935. Renz deals rather more with the *Ars Amatoria* and the *Remedia Amoris* than with the *Amores*, though the latter work is discussed. Part I of his thesis compares various mythological passages of the *Ars* with their counterparts in the *Metamorphoses*, seeking to substantiate R. Heinze's theories about elegiac narrative. Part II treats of Ovid's possible use of mythological handbooks and of miscellaneous topics to do with the external *form* of his exempla. (Now there is also R.M. Krill, 'Mythology in the Amatory Works of Ovid', in *Ovidianum*, Bucharest 1976, pp.365-71, which I have not seen.)

2. For the similarities in general and in detail between *Am.*II,12 and Prop.II,14 (and I,8b), see R. Neumann, *Qua Ratione Ovidius in Amoribus Scribendis Properti Elegiis Usus Sit*, diss. Göttingen 1919, pp.102-5.

3. Analyzed above, pp.118-22.

than a military triumph over the Parthians. The predominant purpose of the Propertian elegy is to contrast the poet's present joy with his past misery and despair, and with his doubts about the future. The four mythological exempla which head the poem are, as we saw, intimately connected with this complex theme. In Ovid *Am.*II,12 on the other hand, the idea, and all that it implies, that a victory in love may be greater than a victory in war, constitutes the whole poem.[4] For Ovid the metaphorical description of the winning of his girl as a *victory*, invites comparison and contrast with the military equivalent, which has supplied the terms of the metaphor. He is not concerned, as Propertius had been, with the emotional implications of his triumph, with its connexion with past and future experience; he is concerned rather with the implications of his triumph *as such*. It is clear that the role of myth in Ovid's poem must be very different from its role in Propertius II,14. Whereas in the latter elegy the selection of exempla was influenced by the complexity of situation and emotion, in Ovid's poem it is *wit* - the wit that sees poetic possibilities in a comparison between erotic and military triumphs - that dictates the choice of exempla.

Myth first appears in *Am.*II,12 at *ll.*9 f.:

> Pergama cum caderent bello superata bilustri,
> ex tot in Atridis pars quota laudis erat?

Myth operates here as a kind of shorthand, enabling the poet to ask in a few words, 'How much of the credit for a great victory is due to the commander as opposed to his men?' The answer, clearly, is meant to be, 'Very little.' This is a new idea in the context of the poem, offering Ovid fresh opportunities for the exercise of wit; and he continues to play with the notion down to *l.*16. Having introduced the paradeigmatic example of Agamemnon's (and the whole Greek army's) victory at Troy, Ovid is now able to suggest that the glory of his

---

4. Other instances of this Ovidian technique of expanding earlier elegiac motifs into major poetic themes may be seen in *Am.*I,2 and I,9.

own victory was in fact greater than the Greek commander's, since he was at once army - *me milite ... ipse eques ... pedes ... signifer*, 13 f. - and leader. The sole purpose then, of the mythological reference in 9 f. is to 'set up' the joke developed in the lines that follow. Ovid here (and elsewhere, as we shall see below) assigns a very specific, limited function to the exemplum. We do not, and should not expect to, find the influence of the exemplum extending beyond its immediate context to the poem as a whole.

In line 17 of the same elegy Ovid approaches his 'victory' from a new direction. He now declares *nec belli est noua causa mei*: his is not the first battle to be fought over a woman. There follows a series of five exempla, four drawn from the world of myth, one from the natural world.[5] That Ovid combines these two types of examples is interesting; it highlights the fact that he is here using his mythic exempla for a purely illustrative purpose, which puts them on precisely the same level as the nature-exemplum. The poet is not concerned to exploit the complexity of mythological situations in the Propertian manner but to use them simply to support the assertion *nec belli est noua causa mei*. And for this purely illustrative purpose a nature-exemplum (which, lacking human characters, can never possess the complexity of myth) is just as good as a mythic exemplum. Given this straightforward

---

5. Ovid is fond of combining mythological exempla with examples of other kinds; see *Am.*II,9,7-10; II,14, 23-36; II,17,14-22; II,19,25-32; III,4,11-24. The same procedure is frequent in the *Ars* and *Remedia* (for references see H. Renz (*diss.cit.* n.1) p.43, and K. Prinz, 'Untersuchungen zu Ovids *Remedia Amoris*', *WS* 36, 1914, 36-83, and 39, 1917, 91-121 and 259-90, pp.45 and 93 f.). It is rare in the earlier elegists; but see Tib.I,4,17-20 and 27-38; Prop.I,2,8-24 and II,3,47-54 (with the comments of B. Kölmel, *Die Funktion des Mythologischen in der Dichtung des Properz*, diss. Heidelberg 1957, pp.41-3). Ovid is much fonder in general of non-mythological examples than either Tibullus or Propertius - see *Am.*I,2,11-16; I,7,52-8; I,8,51 f. and 56; I,10,25-8 (note the very rhetorical-sounding *sumite in exemplum pecudes ratione carentes*); I,15, 31 f.; II,7,15 f.; II,9,19-22; II,9b,29-32; II, 10,13 f.; II,16,41; II,17,31 f.

illustrative purpose, the series of mythological examples is, I believe, too long in relation to the length of the poem. The individual exempla do not earn their place in the series by any especial liveliness of wit (as do the exempla in other series);[6] and since all the exempla make precisely the same point, *femina ... femina ... femina* in *Am.*II,12,19-24 becomes tedious in a way that *nec sic ... nec sic ... nec sic* in Propertius II,14,3-7, does not.

The second pair of elegies which invites comparison and contrast, due to the similarity of their opening verses, is Propertius I,3 and Ovid *Am.*I,10. It is chiefly the introductory section of both poems, in which the poet's mistress is compared with various mythological women, that will concern us here.

In elegy I,3, as we saw in the previous chapter,[7] Propertius exploited to considerable effect the emotional and pictorial associations attaching to these mythological characters introduced into the opening lines. He allowed his exempla of Ariadne, Andromache, and the exhausted Bacchante, not only to illustrate the loveliness of the sleeping Cynthia in three distinct ways, but also (at least in the case of Ariadne and the Bacchante) to prepare the reader for the poet's irruption in the lines that followed. Furthermore, Propertius introduced again into the closing lines of the elegy allusions to myth which, together with certain verbal echoes of the exempla which began the poem, enabled him to recreate about Cynthia the idealized aura that surrounded her at the start.

Turning to Ovid *Am.*I,10,1-8, we find an apparently very similar use of the mythological exemplum:

> Qualis ab Eurota Phrygiis auecta carinis
> coniugibus belli causa duobus erat,
> qualis erat Lede, quam plumis abditus albis
> callidus in falsa lusit adulter aue,
> qualis Amymone siccis errauit in Argis,
> cum premeret summi uerticis urna comas,

---

6. See e.g. *Am.*II,14,13 ff. and III,4,19 ff., examined below, pp.193 f. and 194-6 respectively.

7. Above, Chapter 4, pp.113-8.

talis eras: aquilamque in te taurumque timebam
et quicquid magno de Ioue fecit amor.

In these lines Ovid imitates the external form of Propertius I,3,1-8 - he too writes *qualis ... qualis ... qualis ... talis*, underlining the obvious point of comparison between the mythological heroines and his mistress, namely their beauty. There is a further similarity. Propertius, as was pointed out, chose exempla which performed a complex function within the poem I,3. Ovid too selects mythological illustrations the poetic function of which is similarly complex. Commentators on *Am.*I,10,1-8 commonly suppose that the sole purpose of these illustrations, the purpose underlined by the repeated *qualis* picked up by *talis*, is to illuminate Corinna's beauty.[8] (I assume the girl involved is Corinna, though she is not named.)[9] But there is another, witty, point made by the exempla. Into lines 1-8 Ovid deliberately introduces myths which exemplify not only the great beauty of the heroines involved, but also the danger of seduction to which that beauty exposed them. This latter point is made explicit in the first two exempla: Helen was *Phrygiis auecta carinis* (*l.*1), Lede was she:

---

8. Thus e.g. W. Schöne, *De Propertii Ratione Fabulas Adhibendi*, diss. Leipzig 1911, p.11, and Neumann (*diss.cit.* n.2) pp.22 f. (An exception is Barsby in his perceptive commentary on the passage). In general critics compare Ovid *Am.*I,10,1-8 with Prop.I,3,1-8 to Ovid's disadvantage; this is because they judge him by criteria appropriate to Propertius' use of myth but not to his own. Th. Birt is fairly typical of such critics: 'Bei Properz beherrscht die Kunstanschauung, die sein erster Vers in uns erregt, das ganze Gedicht bis zur letzten Zeile; Proöm und Erzählung sind nothwendig für einander, das Ganze ein Organismus, wie ein guter Musiksatz ... Bei Ovid hat die Einleitung im Grunde mit der Elegie nicht zu thun. Sie könnte ganz anders lauten, sie könnte fehlen, und das Gedicht wäre, was es ist. So arbeitete dieser Schnelldichter und leichtfüssige Epigone.' ('Die Vatikanische Ariadne und die Dritte Elegie des Properz', *RhM* 50, 1895, 31-65, 161-90, p.190.)

9. I shall make this assumption for all the *Amores* discussed in this chapter, unless there is reason to suppose otherwise.

> ..... quam plumis abditus albis
> callidus in falsa lusit adulter aue. (I,10,3 f.)

The attempted rape of Amymone by a satyr and Poseidon's enjoyment of her are not specifically mentioned, but their occasion- when she went to draw water at a spring - is alluded to (5 f.).[10] Thus these opening exempla not only stress Corinna's beauty, they also prepare the way for Ovid's preposterous assertion in 7 f.:

> talis eras: aquilamque in te taurumque timebam
> et quicquid magno de Ioue fecit amor.

He can say he fears for Corinna in this way, because the case of Ganymede and of Europa (alluded to in *l.*7 by *aquilamque ... taurumque*) was precisely parallel to that of Helen, Lede and Amymone; in each case the mythic character's beauty made him or her the object of some amorous attempt. Therefore, since, as the exempla have proved, Corinna is equally as beautiful as those mythological heroines, the poet must fear lest she too become the object of an attempted rape - this time on the part of the most amorous of the gods, Jove.[11]

So far I have been concerned to draw attention to the *similarity* between Ovid's and Propertius' use of mythological examples in the first eight lines of I,3 and *Am.*I,10. I have pointed out the similarities of structure between the two exempla-series and shown how both poets exploit the complexity of mythic situations for their respective purposes. But there is an enormous difference in their uses of myth underlying these surface similarities, the same difference we detected above between the use of exempla in Propertius II,14 and Ovid *Am.*II,12. In *Am.*I,10 (just as in *Am.*II,12) Ovid's mythological exempla are made to function only

---

10. Further, Barsby makes the attractive suggestion that *errauit* (5) 'may in retrospect be seen to contain the implication "was led into error".' (*comm. ad loc.*)

11. The poet's fear that his beloved's beauty may attract Jove's attentions is a common theme in Greek epigram (though only in homosexual epigrams where the poet compares his beloved to Ganymede). See the examples quoted above, Chapter 1, pp.64 f.

in their immediate context. Ovid does indeed exploit the inherent complexity of myth by imparting a dual function to his exempla, but this function has been fully performed by *l*.11, after which point the elegist moves on to a new theme (his mistress' venality). He is not concerned to connect the exempla with the poem as a whole. Ovid again differs from Propertius in the *purpose* for which he makes his exempla complex. Propertius' reason for introducing certain significant mythological episodes into the opening verses of I,3, a fundamentally serious reason, has already been mentioned.[12] Ovid's purpose, by contrast, is one of wit. He allows complexity to his opening exempla in *Am*.I,10 solely in order to prepare the way for the joke of *ll*.7 ff. Having said that he fears an eagle's or a bull's attempt on Corinna, he continues:

> nunc timor omnis abest animique resanuit error,
> nec facies oculos iam capit ista meos. (I,10,9 f.)

With these words his witty point is made, the significance of the exempla is exhausted and they are left on one side.

What the above analyses of *Am*.II,12 and I,10 have shown, is two of the most characteristic uses to which Ovid put his exempla in the *Amores*. In one of these uses, as in II,12,17-24, the exempla serve simply to illustrate a given point; in the other, as in II,12,9 f. and I,10,1-8, they are made the occasion for an exercise of wit. And this suggests a useful scheme within which to treat of the connexion between myth and (what is presented as) personal experience - Ovid's own and that of his mistress - in the *Amores*. In what follows we will examine the poet's use of myth under categories parallel to, but different from, those we devised for Propertius. (i) Illustrative exempla: where the poet is seeking simply to illustrate some given point of his own or his mistress' experience. (ii) Witty exempla: comprising uses of myth by Ovid solely or primarily for the sake of wit, a joke, a humorous

---

12. Above, p.176.

sally.[13] (iii) Mixed exempla: exempla which combine both of the above functions. What was said earlier[14] about the categorizing of Propertius' uses of myth, applies again here. The headings just outlined are meant to be useful in distinguishing various tendencies in Ovid's employment of mythic exempla, but they are not rigidly mutually exclusive. Nor are they exhaustive: to conclude this chapter we will look at some instances, falling outside the above categories, in which Ovid handles myth very much in the manner of Propertius. Accordingly, I term these instances: (iv) 'Propertian' exempla.

(i) Illustrative Exempla

In *Am.*I,7 Ovid brings himself before us full of repentance for having struck his mistress. He bewails the madness that drove him to do the deed and then continues:

> quid?[15] non et clipei dominus septemplicis Aiax
> strauit deprensos lata per arua greges,
> et uindex in matre patris, malus ultor, Orestes
> ausus in arcanas poscere tela deas? (I,7,7-10)

Ovid here takes great care that the exempla perform their circumscribed function perfectly. The second mythological illustration in particular, is very carefully worded so as to exemplify precisely the thought of 5 f.—

---

13. I shall not attempt to define 'wit' and 'humour' or to distinguish between them. See, however, J.-M. Frécaut, *L'Esprit et L'Humour chez Ovide*, Grenoble 1972, Introduction, where such an attempt is made. On pp.144-50 Frécaut touches on Ovid's use of exempla in the *Amores* (and elsewhere) to create witty and humorous effects, but he does little more than list the relevant *loci*. A rapid survey of Ovid's humour also in E. de Saint Denis, 'Le Malicieux Ovide', in *Ovidiana*, ed. Herescu, pp.184-200.

14. Above, Chapter 4, p.111.

15. In using *quid?* to introduce his exempla Ovid is no doubt echoing Prop.II,8,21: *quid? non Antigonae tumulo* ... etc. (noted by Brandt *ad loc.*). *quid?* introduces exempla also in Prop.II,22A,29 ff. and again in Ovid *Am.*III,6,29 f.

tunc ego uel caros potui uiolare parentes
saeua uel in sanctos uerbera ferre deos.

-(a couplet which is, of course, itself presented in a manner calculated to chime perfectly with the exemplum following). 'I could have done violence to my parents or struck the holy gods', says Ovid. But Orestes was exactly one who both killed a parent and attacked gods; and at the same time he is a perfect example of one who, like the poet, was driven by *furor* to his particular acts of violence. What of the Ajax-exemplum? This too supplies us with a prime example of *furor*, while further illustrating the poet's case by presenting the idea of an attack by a strong man on a weak defenceless adversary.

In the parenthesis above I have already drawn attention to the way in which Ovid adjusted what he presents as his personal experience, so that it dovetailed with the Orestes-exemplum. But we should note too another slight adjustment of a similar kind: whereas later, at *l.*44, it is *caeca ira* that the poet blames for his transgression, in both lines 2 and 3, preceding the exempla, it is *furor* that is said to be responsible (cp. also *uesana manu*, *l.*4). This makes Ajax and Orestes more exact paradigms for his own situation, since it was *furor* rather than *ira* (a species of *furor*) that was responsible for *their* particular outrages.[16]

A little later in the same poem, having described his *furor* and its effects, Ovid goes on to explain:

ergo ego digestos potui laniare capillos?
nec dominam motae dedecuere comae. (*Am.*I,7,11 f.)

The pentameter in this couplet is little more than an 'aside' to the reader, yet the poet chooses to illustrate the thought it expresses by no less than three mythological exempla:

sic formosa fuit; talem Schoeneida dicam
Maenalias arcu sollicitasse feras;
talis periuri promissaque uelaque Thesei
fleuit praecipites Cressa tulisse Notos;

---

16. A similar observation is made by H. Akbar Khan, '*Ovidius Furens*: A Revaluation of *Amores* I,7', *Latomus* 25, 1966, 880-94, pp.881-2.

sic, nisi uittatis quod erat, Cassandra, capillis,
procubuit templo, casta Minerua, tuo. (I,7,13-18)

Here, as elsewhere, Ovid cannot resist drawing out all the possible implications of the situation he is describing; he cannot tell us his mistress' hair was disarrayed without adding further that this disarray suited her, and then going on to supply mythological parallels. The adduction of mythic exempla in this instance constitutes yet another means of expanding and varying his theme.[17] This is not to say they are irrelevant - though it is, I think, noticeable that they do not cohere as closely with the thought they illustrate as the pair of exempla at 7 ff., discussed above. The point of the first mythological illustration, the Atalanta-exemplum, is left implicit. She being a heroine of myth her beauty is taken for granted - as is that of Ariadne and Cassandra below - while the fact that she is hunting implies that her hair is flying loose. In the second exemplum Ariadne's coiffure is assumed to be dishevelled, while *fleuit* (16) of her recalls *flet* (4), of the poet's mistress. Of the three heroines, only Cassandra's hair is specifically mentioned (but we should note that Ovid's passion for completeness of exposition compels him to add the irrelevant *nisi uittatis quod erat, l.*17). Her situation too, her succumbing before her attacker, suggests a parallel with Corinna, cowering away before the poet's onslaught.[18]

---

17. The same procedure is evident in *Am.*II,8,11-14; II,14,29-34; II,17,15-20 (note in the latter two cases the addition of a non-mythological exemplum in 35 f. and 21 f. respectively).

18. The perceptive analysis of the exempla examined in this paragraph, by H. Fränkel (*Ovid: a Poet between Two Worlds*, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1945, p.181 n.2) deserves quotation but is, I feel, just slightly overstated: 'All the three examples from legend (13-18) extol the charming looks of the poet's mistress, but only the first does no more than that. The other two, far from being repetitious and gratuitous, add delicate sentimental touches to the picture, on an ascending emotional scale. While the second example sympathizes with the lady's cruel disappointment, the third worships her as a hallowed being, desecrated by profane hands.' See also his comments *ibid.*, p.19.

Another example of this purely illustrative use of the exemplum occurs in *Am.*I,14,21 f., in a very similar context. Again Ovid, talking about his mistress' hair, in the early morning before she has risen and had it 'done', comments:

> tum quoque erat neclecta decens, ut Thracia Bacche,
> cum temere in uiridi gramine lassa iacet.

And again he feels it necessary to fill in the picture by means of a mythological illustration. Still, the illustration is apt: Bacchantes were commonly portrayed in art with hair in disarray, while *lassa iacet* of this particular individual naturally recalls Corinna's situation (echoing *iacuit* of her, *l.*20). But Ovid oversteps the mark when, in *ll.*31 ff. of the same poem, Corinna's *formosae comae* must be compared with the hair of no less than three deities - Apollo, Bacchus and the Venus Anadyomene.[19]

One is sometimes tempted to suppose, in examining a particular use of exempla by Ovid, that on this occasion at least, the examples may have more than just a simple connexion with their context, they may reveal allusive links not obvious at a first reading. But then on closer examination one finds this is not the case; the poet is not in general concerned, as Tibullus and Propertius had been, to create subtle ties between myth and his own or his girl's experience. He is quite simply seeking to prove a definite given point.

All this is true of the series of mythic illustrations in *Am.*II,17, introduced to demonstrate that great and lowly (Corinna and Ovid) are not wholly incompatible:

> traditur et nymphe mortalis amore Calypso
> capta recusantem detinuisse uirum;
> creditur aequoream Pthio Nereida regi,
> Egeriam iusto concubuisse Numae;
> Volcani Venus est, quamuis incude relicta
> turpiter obliquo claudicet ille pede. (*Am.*II,17,15-20)

---

19. The poet seems to have been fascinated by the parallel between mythological and real hair; see yet again *Am.*II,4,41-3: 'seu pendent niuea pulli ceruice capilli,/Leda fuit nigra conspicienda coma;/ seu flauent, placuit croceis Aurora capillis ...'

One might suppose that these exempla are intended to suggest that Corinna by her beauty ensnared an unwilling Ovid (15 f.), or that she should condescend to accept him for her partner, just as Thetis, Egeria and Venus accepted Peleus, Numa and Vulcan respectively. But this supposition would be weakened by the non-mythological exemplum which rounds off the series:

> carminis hoc ipsum genus impar, sed tamen apte
> iungitur herous cum breuiore modo. (II,17,21 f.)

This neat and witty couplet makes it quite clear that, even if we were meant to see certain allusive implications in the earlier mythic examples, those implications were strictly subordinate to the explicit purpose of the series which is to prove the simple statement: *aptari magnis inferiora licet* (14).

The function of the exempla-series in Ovid *Am.*I,9, the well-known *Militat omnis amans*, is no different from that of the series just examined. In this elegy Ovid tries to demonstrate that real *militia* and *militia amoris* are very similar. Having pointed out a number of parallels between them, he draws a conclusion at 31 f.:

> ergo desidiam quicumque uocabat amorem,
> desinat: ingenii est experientis Amor.

And this conclusion in turn must be reinforced by a series of four mythological examples:

> ardet in abducta Briseide maestus Achilles
> (dum licet, Argeas frangite, Troes, opes);
> Hector ab Andromaches conplexibus ibat ad arma,
> et galeam capiti quae daret, uxor erat;
> summa ducum, Atrides uisa Priameide fertur
> Maenadis effusis obstipuisse comis;
> Mars quoque deprensus fabrilia uincula sensit:
> notior in caelo fabula nulla fuit. (*Am.*I,9,33-40)

Neumann points out that Ovid is here imitating Propertius' exempla-series in II,22A,25 ff.; and he rightly judges that Ovid is less successful than Propertius on this occasion.[20] Both elegists are seeking to prove a general

---

20. R. Neumann (*diss.cit.* n.2) pp.32 f. We have already dealt with the Propertian exempla above, Chapter 4, pp.149 ff.

point arising out of the argument of their respective poems - the earlier poet that *nullus amor uires eripit ipse suas* (Prop.II,22A,28), the later that *ingenii est experientis Amor* (*Am.*I,9,32).[21] But in Prop.II,22A, the variation between statement and rhetorical question, the fact that the point to be demonstrated is inserted into the middle of the exempla-series, and the wit and point of the exempla themselves, lend the Propertian passage a brilliance that is absent from the Ovidian one. Ovid wants, very simply, to show that Love and vigorous activity (as exemplified by soldiers) are quite compatible - in a word, that *miles omnis amat.*[22] But in each of the exempla, with the exception of the third, it is only the hexameter that makes this point, while the pentameter is otiose elaboration, without relevance to its context. In addition, since the individual exempla are not enlivened by any particular wit, the series they comprise is felt by the reader to be too long.

We need mention only briefly the prime example of mythological exempla used for a purely illustrative purpose in Ovid's *Amores*, namely *Am.*III,6,25-82.[23] This passage illustrates a point which purports to arise out of an experience the poet has while trying to reach his mistress. A river blocks his way, so, to persuade it to let him cross, he says:

> flumina debebant iuuenes in amore iuuare:
> flumina senserunt ipsa, quid esset amor. (III,6,23 f.)

---

21. Neumann's discussion of Ovid's exempla-series is rather laboured. The reason is that he takes the series to refer to the whole couplet 31 f., whereas it is narrowly restricted to illustrating the sentence *ingenii ... Amor*. Neumann does, however, eventually conclude: 'Ovidius igitur nihil aliud dicere vult nisi amorem et virtutem omnino in iisdem hominibus inveniri posse.' (*ibid.*, p.33)

22. The neat formulation of A. Spies, *Militat Omnis Amans, Ein Beitrag zur Bildersprache der antiken Erotik*, diss. Tübingen 1930, p.67.

23. On this poem see Fr. Wilhelm, 'Zu Ovid *Am.*III,6', *Philologische Wochenschrift*, 1933, cols.141-4 and 169-73 (mainly an exercise in *Quellenforschung*).

The series of ten exempla (25-44) followed by the long narrative of Anio's love for Ilia (45-82), ostensibly illustrates the proposition in the pentameter of this couplet, 'rivers have known what it is to love'. But quite obviously the whole passage 25-82 very soon loses even the slight connexion it had with its context and becomes a *tour de force* intended at once to display Ovid's erudition, his skill in versifying some most unpromising material containing a host of Greek names, and his ability to sustain a considerable narrative in elegiacs.

It seems likely that *Am.*III,6 is an early poem of Ovid's,[24] and that in it he is imitating Hellenistic catalogue-elegy of the type examined at the start of Chapter 1. If this latter point is indeed correct, then Ovid's poem is good evidence that the link between the personal experience of the poet and the voluminous mythology of those catalogue-elegies was tenuous in the extreme.

Before going on to consider Ovid's witty exempla in the *Amores*, we should note a characteristic feature of his illustrative uses of myth. Which is that the mythological illustration is very frequently preceded by a clearly worded sentence or gnome which supplies in succinct form the material to be illustrated.[25] Maxims or gnomes with this function are to be found in almost all of the passages from the *Amores* dealt with above, in II,12,17; I,7,5 f. and 12; I,14,21; II,17, 14; I,9,32; III,6,23 f And they appear too in other elegies some of which we will examine below. Since the procedure is characteristic of Ovid, and will be touched on again at a later stage,[26] I cite the evidence in full. In addition to the *loci* already given, we should note

---

24. This is taken for granted by Wilhelm, *ibid.*, col. 141, 'diesem iuvenale carmen' and H. Fränkel (*op. cit.* n.18) p.233 n.11, 'Ovid's earliest work, Am. III,6 ...'

25. Noted also by H. Renz (*diss.cit.* n.1) p.41.

26. Below, p.210 f.

the following: the maxim *non habet euentus sordida praeda bonos* introducing exempla involving Tarpeia and Eriphyla in I,10,48 ff.; the sententious couplet II, 19,25 ff. -

> pinguis amor nimiumque patens in taedia nobis
> uertitur et, stomacho dulcis ut esca, nocet.

- introducing the stories of Jove, lover of Danae and Io; and in III,4,17 ff. the gnome *nitimur in uetitum semper cupimusque negata* preceding (with the interposition of an illustration drawn from everyday life) exempla involving Io, Danae and Penelope - which in turn introduces a further couplet of proverbial character:

> quidquid seruatur, cupimus magis, ipsaque furem
> cura uocat; pauci, quod sinit alter, amant. (III,4,25 f.)

The function of the exempla in all of these cases is solely, or at least primarily, to illustrate the thought of the sentence, gnome or maxim which introduces them.[27] Once they have done so they are left to one side, and the elegist goes on to approach his theme, whatever it may be, from a new, different angle. Ovid is not concerned to let myth influence the direction of a whole poem in the manner of his elegiac predecessors, noted above; in the *Amores* the significance of the mythic material is exhausted by its immediate context.

(ii) Witty Exempla

One of the clearest instances of a mythological exemplum introduced into an elegy by Ovid purely for the sake of wit, occurs in *Am.*II,4. In this poem Ovid

---

27. Of the passages just cited, II,19,25 ff. and III, 4,17 ff. are handled below in Section (iii) of this chapter. All the passages mentioned in the above paragraph are from elegies which deal, however tangentially, with the poet's or his mistress' experience. But we should cp. also II,6 (the 'Lament for Polly'), 39 f.: 'optima prima fere manibus rapiuntur auaris;/implentur numeris deteriora suis', illustrated by the examples of Protesilaus and Thersites, and of Hector and his brothers; and III,9 (the 'Lament for Tibullus'), 19 f.: 'scilicet omne sacrum mors inportuna profanat;/omnibus obscuras inicit illa manus', which the exempla of Orpheus, Linus and Homer reinforce.

tells of the different attractions of women which inflame him. At 29 f. he describes the skills of a dancing-girl, then says parenthetically:

> ut taceam de me, qui causa tangor ab omni,
> illic Hippolytum pone, Priapus erit. (II,4,31 f.)

It is quite obvious that the ludicrous juxtaposition of these mythic types of frigidity and lust[28] is the sole and sufficient reason for this brief digression from his theme; and further, that the reflective reference to the poet's own character (*l.*31) is included merely for the sake of the witty mythological illustration it prompts.

Myth is used in precisely the same impudent fashion in *Am.*I,8, where Ovid overhears a *lena* corrupting his mistress by her cynical advice. 'Even apparently prudish girls are only dissembling', says the *lena* (45 f.), and:

> Penelope iuuenum uires temptabat in arcu;
> qui latus argueret corneus arcus erat. (I,8,47 f.)

The poet's primary reason for introducing this exemplum is to make the reader smile at his dethroning of Penelope from her traditionally elevated place in the mythological tradition.[29] And the reinterpretation of the famous Test of the Bow in an obscene sense (*cf.* the double-meanings in *latus* and *corneus arcus*) is clearly intended to provoke a shocked amusement.[30]

---

28. The impudence of the juxtaposition is very much in the manner of the *Priapea*; see Brandt *ad loc.*, who quotes *Priap.*19,5: 'haec sic non modo te, Priape, posset,/ privignum quoque sic movere Phaedrae'.

29. *Cf.* E. Courtney, 'Three Poems of Propertius' (containing a comparison of Prop.IV,5 and Ovid *Am.*I,8), *BICS* 16, 1969, 70-87, p.85, and J.-M. Frécaut (*op.cit.* n.13) p.149. Not dissimilar is Ovid's reference to the Sabine women in 39 f.

30. As in II,4,32, so here, Ovid is again very close to the Priapic tradition; *cf. Priap.*68,29 ff. dealing with Penelope: 'quae sic casta manes, ut iam convivia visas/utque fututorum sit tua plena domus./E quibus ut scires, quicumque valentior esset,/haec es ad arrectos verba locuta procos:/"nemo meo melius nervum tendebat Ulixe,/sive illi laterum sive erat artis opus./Qui quoniam periit, vos nunc intendite, qualem/esse virum sciero, vir sit ut ille meus"' (quoted by Brandt, *ad loc.*).

Similar in turn to *Am.*I,8,47 f., as regards its function, is the witty use of myth in III,7, the poem in which Ovid relates the story of his humiliating failure in bed. At 39 f. he says -

> at qualem uidi tantum tetigique puellam!
> sic etiam tunica tangitur illa sua.

- a reminiscence which provokes the assertion:

> illius ad tactum Pylius iuuenescere possit
> Tithonosque annis fortior esse suis. (III,7,41 f.)

In *Am.*II,4,32 the wit resided in the unlikely association of Hippolytus and Priapus, both of whom, nevertheless, appeared in their traditional roles. But here, as in I,8,47 f., the humorous effect is differently achieved - by the casting of stock mythological types in a new and unexpected role. Just as he transformed Penelope into a wanton, so now Ovid makes Nestor and Tithonus exempla not of extreme longevity, which they usually exemplify,[31] but of senile impotence. And in this new role they are made to illustrate in an amusing way the girl's powerful charms which failed to arouse the poet.

Still in III,7, at 51 f. and 61 f., mythic exempla are again used to witty effect, though the means employed to achieve this effect are different from those examined so far. In these instances it is not the exempla as such that evoke amusement. In fact, placed in a different context they could make perfectly serious points. Our amusement results rather from the disparity between the apparently solemn tone of the exempla themselves and the frivolity of their application. At *ll.*49 f., lamenting his wasted opportunity with the girl, Ovid introduces the mythological illustration that follows by a series of rhetorical questions:

> quo mihi fortunae tantum? quo regna sine usu?
> quid, nisi possedi diues auarus opes?

To reinforce all this, the Tantalus-exemplum:

> sic aret mediis taciti uulgator in undis
> pomaque, quae nullo tempore tangat, habet. (III,7,51 f.)

---

31. *Cf.* e.g. Prop.II,25,9 f.: 'at me ab amore tuo deducet nulla senectus,/siue ego Tithonus siue ego Nestor ero.'

Now neither of these couplets (49 f. and 51 f.), detached from their context as they are here, is in itself particularly amusing; and we can see that these lines could form part of a quite serious - if somewhat rhetorical - argument.[32] But in their application to the poet's situation the details of the rhetorical questions are seen to be wholly *un*serious, and the traditional motives of the Tantalus-myth - *aret mediis in undis, pomaque habet, quae nullo tempore tangat* - assume a ludicrous meaning very different from their usual one. Again in 61 f. Ovid presents what could, in different circumstances, be a pair of serious illustrations of a serious point:

> quid iuuet ad surdas si cantet Phemius aures?
> quid miserum Thamyran picta tabella iuuat?

But singing to deaf ears and placing pictures before the eyes of the blind have a new and witty sense lent them by their context. We are no doubt meant to recall the *blanditias* and *publica uerba* whispered to the poet by his girl in 11 f. and *qualem uidi puellam* in 39, and to be prepared for the fruitless erotic fantasies mentioned by Ovid in the lines following the exempla (63-6).

An exemplum used in the same way occurs in *Am.*I, 4,7 f.:

> desine mirari, posito quod candida uino
> Atracis[33] ambiguos traxit in arma uiros.

What prompts this outburst is the fact that Ovid will have to see his beloved in the arms of another man. Quite obviously, the exemplum has little or no illustrative value, neither is it particularly witty in itself. Its sole function is to 'set up' the amusingly absurd reference to the poet's personal

---

32. Lines 49-52 are in fact lifted from a serious context; they are an adaptation of Horace *Epist.* I,5,12: *quo mihi fortunam, si non conceditur uti?* and *Sat.*I,1,61 ff. containing the exemplum of Tantalus.

33. I.e. Hippodamia, from Atrax in Thessaly.

situation that follows:

> nec mihi silua domus nec equo mea membra cohaerent:
> uix a te uideor posse tenere manus. (I,4,9 f.)

So far in this section, then, we have either seen Ovid wittily pointing the exemplum so that it is in itself a source of amusement, while his own or his mistress' situation forms merely a pretext for the amusing sally, or found him creating humorous effects by applying quite ordinary exempla to ludicrous situations in which he is involved. In all the instances just reviewed Ovid is, I believe, successful in doing what he sets out to do, he succeeds in making the reader smile. But there are occasions when the joke does not quite come off. To conclude this section we shall look briefly at two cases in which the poet attempts, rather than achieves, witty effects by using mythological exempla.

The first is in *Am.*I,13,41 f. where, seeking to delay Aurora's rising, Ovid says angrily to her -

> cur ego plectar amans, si uir tibi marcet ab annis?
> num me nupsisti conciliante seni?

- and then continues:

> aspice quot somnos iuueni donarit amato
> Luna, neque illius forma secunda tuae.
> ipse deum genitor, ne te tam saepe uideret,
> commisit noctes in sua uota duas.[34] (I,13,43-6)

It is not immediately clear what point Ovid is trying to make in these two couplets. In the case of the first exemplum, one would naturally suppose that the hexameter (43) constitutes an appeal to Aurora to let the poet sleep for as long a time as Luna allowed Endymion. But to take the hexameter in this way makes the pentameter (44) very difficult of interpretation. It seems rather that we must understand line 43 as an allusion to Luna's *spending long hours of dalliance* with Endymion, her paramour, the suggestion being that Aurora too should take a lover - which would effectively remove her from the sky. (A similar point was made by the exemplum in

---

34. These lines are well analyzed by Barsby, *ad loc.*

39 f.) Line 44 referring to Luna's beauty would then signify that Aurora need not be ashamed of taking a lover - Luna was no less divinely beautiful than she, yet *Luna* deigned to do so.

The second exemplum is meant to make the same point as the first. Adapting the story of how Jupiter once doubled the length of the night, Ovid suggests that the god's reason for so doing was not just his passion for Alcmene (*cf. in sua uota*, 46) but also to avoid seeing Aurora so often (*ne te tam saepe uideret*, 45). The implication, one assumes, is that Aurora too should spend long nights with a lover and stay below the horizon. And again, as in the previous exemplum, Ovid indicates that the mythological character mentioned is not unworthy of imitation by Aurora. (*cf. ipse deum genitor*, 45).[35]

All this, presumably, is meant to be witty. But wit depends above all on transparent clarity and immediate recognition. Here the reader has to work too hard to see the joke, and the point made by the exempla is too forced, for Ovid to have been successful.

The second case of attempted wit scarcely requires discussion. Warning the eunuch Bagoas not to inform against him, Ovid cites the cautionary exempla of Tantalus and Argus:

> quaerit aquas in aquis et poma fugacia captat
> Tantalus: hoc illi garrula lingua dedit;
> dum nimium seruat custos Iunonius Ion,
> ante suos annos occidit; illa dea est. (*Am.*II,2,43-6)

There *is* something slightly comic in the exaggerated threat implied by these lines, but the examples are too tame and commonplace to be really amusing. Furthermore, the end of the pentameter *l.*46, *illa dea est*, is intolerably weak and pointless.

---

35. The impulse to introduce this latter exemplum into a poem addressed to the Dawn, seems to have come from Meleager. *A.P.*V, 172,5 f.: ἤδη γὰρ καὶ πρόσθεν ἐπ' Ἀλκμήνην Διὸς ἦλθες/ἀντίος· οὐκ ἀδαής ἐσσι παλινδρομίης. But whereas the point of the example in Meleager is clear and neat, in Ovid it is confused and obscure.

(iii) Mixed Exempla

We come now to that category of exempla described above as having a dual function, to illustrate and to display wit at the same time. This dual role of the mythological example is most frequently found where a series of several exempla is used to illustrate a particular point. By enlivening the individual exempla of the series with wit, Ovid is able to indulge his passion for completeness of exposition with less fear of evoking tedium in the reader.

The effectiveness of this procedure may be seen from an examination of *Am.*II,14,13-18. In the previous elegy, II,13, Corinna's life had been in danger because of an abortion. Now Ovid invokes mythology to support a general argument against this evil practice, using exempla to reinforce the general point he makes at *ll.*9 f.:

> si mos antiquis placuisset matribus idem,
> gens hominum uitio deperitura fuit.

After the somewhat superfluous couplet 11 f., he goes on:

> quis Priami fregisset opes, si numen aquarum
> iusta recusasset pondera ferre Thetis?
> Ilia si tumido geminos in uentre necasset,
> casurus dominae conditor Vrbis erat;
> si Venus Aenean grauida temerasset in aluo,
> Caesaribus tellus orba futura fuit. (II,14,13-18)

What Ovid has done here is simply to select a number of famous heroes of myth, and then to extrapolate with a rather ghastly wit the possible consequences of their mothers' (or in the case of the Caesars, a female ancestor's) having procured an abortion.[36] There is an added piquancy in the exemplum of Venus and Aeneas where we are conscious that Ovid is sailing very close to the wind in mentioning the Julian line in so frivolous a

---

36. We should note that Ovid tacks the examples of Corinna and himself on to the end of the series (19-22). W. Watts in his article, 'Ovid, the Law and Roman Society on Abortion', *Acta Classica* XVI, 1973, 89-101, sees a further witty purpose in this arrangement; he comments, 'The crescendo to a climax is cleverly calculated and, one supposes, humorous in its egocentrism'. (p.98)

context.[37] Granted that the exempla series - like the elegy in which it occurs - is in bad taste; nevertheless the sheer absurdity of the mythological argument serves to hold our interest as we move from one exemplum to the next, with the result that the series as a whole is easily digested.

The same technique operates in *Am.*II,19 and its companion-piece, III,4. In the former poem, Ovid uses exempla to back up the argument of *ll.*25 f.:

> pinguis amor nimiumque patens in taedia nobis
> uertitur et, stomacho dulcis ut esca, nocet. (II,19,25 f.)

Following on this couplet, the poet wittily adapts the traditional versions of the Danae and Io myths to suit his argument:

> si numquam Danaen habuisset aenea turris,
> non esset Danae de Ioue facta parens;
> dum seruat Iuno mutatam cornibus Io,
> facta est quam fuerat gratior illa Ioui. (II,19,27-30)

Here Ovid contends that it was precisely the fact of Danae's having been immured in the tower that made her desirable to Jove - a neat reversal of the common account, according to which Danae was shut away so that she would *not* be desirable to *any*one. Similarly, in the next couplet, the elegist stands the Io myth on its head, maintaining that Io when guarded in the form of a cow, was more attractive to Jove than previously, when she had been a woman.[38] By presenting myth in this novel and witty fashion Ovid gives life to his illustrations and prevents them from interrupting the movement of the elegy. The paradoxical tone of the exempla harmonizes with the tone of the whole poem, which is itself a clever exercise in paradox.

In *Am.*II,19 Ovid argued that his rival's girl should be guarded, else the poet would drop her; in III,4 he argues the contrary: that she should not be guarded at all. The same point, that difficulty of access to a

---

37. On this topic *cf.* N. Rudd, *Lines of Enquiry*, Cambridge 1976, ch.2, 'History: Ovid and the Augustan Myth'.

38. Io's transformation need not necessarily have been unbecoming; see above, p.117 n.22.

beloved increases her desirability, occurs in both poems (though of course with a different application in each case), and on both occasions is illustrated by exempla involving the same mythological characters. In III,4 this point is made first by *l.*17 preceding the exempla-series, *nitimur in uetitum semper cupimusque negata*, and then by the couplet immediately following it:

> quidquid seruatur, cupimus magis, ipsaque furem
> cura uocat; pauci, quod sinit alter, amant. (III,4,25 f.)

Between this introduction and conclusion we get, as in II,19, the exempla of Io and Danae, but on this occasion together with an additional exemplum involving Penelope:

> centum fronte oculos, centum ceruice gerebat
> Argus, et hos unus saepe fefellit Amor;
> in thalamum Danae ferro saxoque perennem
> quae fuerat uirgo tradita, mater erat:
> Penelope mansit, quamuis custode carebat,
> inter tot iuuenis intemerata procos. (III,4,19-24)

Again as in II,19, the traditional versions of myth are wittily adapted to fit the point requiring illustration. As regards Danae (21 f.), Ovid once more implies that it was the challenge presented by her incarceration, rather than simply her beauty, that led to her being loved by Jove. Here the poet merely gives the traditional story a somewhat novel emphasis; but in the Io-exemplum (19 f.) he presents the myth concerned in a wholly new and individual form.[39] To prove his point Ovid has it that Amor (signifying Jove's love) *frequently* (*saepe*, 20) deceived the ever-vigilant Argus; which can only mean that Jove often had enjoyment of Io *even while* she was still being guarded. This is, of course, very different from the common account, according to which Jove gained access to Io only after Argus had been slain by Hermes. But it demonstrates effectively how useless it is to guard a girl. The last exemplum of the series, involving Penelope, functions as a *Gegenbeispiel*, that is, it reinforces the point to be demonstrated by proving the falsity of its opposite. Odysseus' wife, though

---

39. The peculiarity of this Ovidian version of the Io myth in III,4,19 f. seems not to be remarked on by any of the commentators and critics.

surrounded by young men, was not guarded - and thus (it is implied) remained chaste! Once again myth is seen in a new, amusing light: the archetypal faithful wife, Penelope, remained such only because she would have been too easy a conquest. To each of the three exempla then, Ovid has added some witty detail or twist which enables it suitably to discharge its illustrative function; and at the same time this enlivening of the exempla allows the reader to move from one to the other and so through the series without tedium.

Before leaving *Am.*III,4 we should note how carefully Ovid has dovetailed his exempla and the gnomic couplet which follows them so that the two fit together perfectly. The couplet 25 f. consists of a tricolon sentence. It is clear that the poet intends the three cola to pick up the three exempla of the series which precedes. The words *quidquid seruatur, cupimus magis* and *ipsaque furem cura uocat* pick up his versions of the myths of Io and Danae, while *pauci, quod sinit alter, amant* draws the moral of the concluding Penelope-exemplum.

The myth of Danae and Jupiter seems to have appealed to Ovid's fancy.[40] He uses it once again in *Am.*III,8, in an exemplum sandwiched between a complaint that Corinna prefers a brutal soldier to himself, the Muses priest (1-28), and a diatribe against wealth (35-60). The purpose of the long mythological exemplum in lines 29-34 is to demonstrate the power of money. It is intended more to prepare the way for what follows than to illustrate what has gone before. There *are* some allusions to the wealth of Ovid's rival in 1-28 (see *ll.*3 f.; 9; 20) but the main emphasis of this section is on his vulgar brutality. It is in the section 35-60, following the exemplum, that the poet delivers himself of a fullscale denunciation of riches and the corruption

---

40. In general, Ovid in his *Amores*, like the Hellenistic epigrammatists, (see above pp.64-6), seems to have enjoyed treating Jupiter frivolously. Besides the examples handled in this chapter (*Am.*I,3,21 ff.; I,10,3 f. and 7 f.; I,13,45 f.; II,19,27 ff.; III,4,19 ff.; III,8,29 ff.) cp. also II,1,15 ff. and II,5,51 f.

for which they are responsible. And it is this denunciation that the exemplum prepares us for:

> Iuppiter, admonitus nihil esse potentius auro,
> corruptae pretium uirginis ipse fuit.
> dum merces aberat, durus pater, ipsa seuera,
> aerati postes, ferrea turris erat;
> sed postquam sapiens in munere uenit adulter,
> praebuit ipsa sinus et dare iussa dedit.[41] (III,8,29-34)

Since these lines are followed immediately by the verses -

> at cum regna senex caeli Saturnus haberet,
> omne lucrum tenebris alta premebat humus:
> aeraque et argentum cumque auro pondera ferri
> Manibus admorat, nullaque massa fuit. (III,8,35-8)

- it is clear that Ovid intended a contrast between the present reign of Jupiter when the king of the gods himself has turned into a golden bribe, and the far-off reign of Saturn when gold was not even known. The idea of the corrupting influence of money, demonstrated by Ovid's version of the Danae-exemplum, is then, after a somewhat diffuse general diatribe in 40-52, taken a number of steps further by lines 53-60.

So much for the illustrative and probative purpose of the exemplum. That it is also brilliantly witty hardly requires demonstration. Let it suffice to quote Guy Lee's fine translation of the passage, which admirably brings out its qualities:

> Joye Almighty realized gold's omnipotence
> when he cashed himself to seduce a girl.
>
> Before the transaction father looked grim, daughter prudish,
> her turret steely, the doorposts coppered.
>
> But when the crafty lecher arrived in cash
> she opened her lap and gave as golden as she got.

Once again then, in this instance, Ovid lends point and

---

41. This version of the Danae myth and the application which it is given, are not original. Both occur in Horace *Odes* III,16 and perhaps derive ultimately from a Stoic original (see G. Williams' edition of *Odes* III *ad loc.*). We may cp. also the epigrams of Antipater, Bassus and Parmenion quoted above (pp.65 f.). Nothing is known of Parmenion, but the other two epigrammatists were writing at the same time as, or possibly just after, Ovid (see Gow-Page, *The Garland of Philip*, introductory notes to these epigrammatists).

wit to a long mythological illustration, and thus avoids boring his audience.

There remain, to conclude this section, the exempla of Milanion and Atalanta, and of Diana, in that most sparkling of all Ovid's elegies, *Am.*III,2. The references to myth are introduced at *ll.*29 ff., where, having lifted his girl's skirts from the dust and admired the legs thus revealed, the poet exclaims:

> talia Milanion Atalantes crura fugacis
> optauit manibus sustinuisse suis;
> talia pinguntur succinctae crura Dianae,
> cum sequitur fortes fortior ipsa feras. (III,2,29-32)

In the first exemplum the hexameter (29), emphasizing as it does the beauty of the girl's legs, illustrates what has gone before (cp. *tam bona crura*, 27), while the pentameter (30) with an amusing παρὰ προσδοκίαν effect, introduces an erotic note[42] picked up by the lines that follow the exempla, especially 35 f.:

> suspicor ex istis et cetera posse placere,
> quae bene sub tenui condita ueste latent.

The rather *risqué* wit of the first exemplum is not to be found in the second, involving Diana, the function of which is simply illustrative.[43] The *crura Dianae* (31) demonstrate, now for a second time, the beauty of the *tam bona crura* of Ovid's girl. Coming as it does after the racy reference to Milanion and Atalanta, the second exemplum seems somewhat tame and inert - the pentameter (32) in particular is weak. One feels that this portion of the elegy would have been better off without it.

---

42. Both here and in *A.A.*III,775, *Milanion umeris Atalantes crura ferebat*, Ovid was almost certainly alluding to erotic paintings. See Brandt's note (together with additional material in his Appendix) on the *Amores* passage; he refers us to Suetonius *Tib.*XLIV: '... Parrhasi quoque tabulam, in qua Meleagro Atalanta ore morigeratur ... in cubiculo dedicavit.'

43. Here too Ovid has paintings in mind, as is made explicit by *pinguntur* (31).

(iv) 'Propertian' Exempla

Ovid's most characteristic uses of the mythological exemplum have now been examined. We have seen him using exempla in the *Amores* either in rhetorical fashion to reinforce or illustrate a point in his argument, or for the sake of a witty sally, or for both purposes simultaneously. These references to myth dealt with so far have been easy to classify and analyse; their purpose has been immediately recognizable. But over and above these instances there are cases less simple to classify, where Ovid uses myth in subtler ways, reminiscent of Propertius. Most of the exempla now to be examined *do* have an obvious explicit function to perform in their respective elegies; but they carry in addition important unobvious implications, implications which enable them to reach beyond their immediate context, and in some cases at least, to make a transition in thought in the elegies in which they occur.

Exempla are skilfully handled in the 'Propertian' manner just described, in *Am.*I,3,21-4:

> carmine nomen habent exterrita cornibus Io
> et quam fluminea lusit adulter aue
> quaeque super pontum simulato uecta iuuenco
> uirginea tenuit cornua uara manu.

Formally, these exempla are connected to the couplet preceding them, *carmine* in line 21 rounding off the sequence *carmina ... carmina* (19 f.); but in content, due to Ovid's careful selection of mythological characters, the examples show closer links with the lines (25 f.) which *follow* the series. The explicit point to be demonstrated - as *carmine nomen habent* (21) makes plain - is that poetry has power to confer lasting fame on its subjects. Now Ovid could have chosen any famous poetic topics as examples to prove his point - the Trojan War or the Seven Against Thebes would have done. But he deliberately chooses examples of *female* characters of myth who were renowned in song, exempla which will have a more powerful and immediate persuasive effect on the girl whose devoted lover-poet he seeks to

become. Not only this: Ovid also selects mythological heroines all of whose erotic histories were inextricably involved, through poetry, with that of Jove. Thus although he has mentioned only the girl (*te*, *l*.19) in the couplet preceding the exempla, in the couplet following them he can declare:

> *nos* quoque per totum pariter *cantabimur* orbem
> iunctaque semper erunt nomina *nostra* tuis. (I,3,25 f.)

Due to the character he has imparted to the exempla-series, instead of simply concluding, 'So you will be as famous, through my poetry, as Io, Leda and Europa' - the point the exempla were introduced to prove - Ovid is able to say, '*We* will be celebrated as a pair of lovers throughout the world (*sc.* just as Jove and Io, Jove and Leda, Jove and Europa are celebrated)'.[44]

Ovid also perhaps intended us to detect an undertone of irony in the exempla (though I would not place as much emphasis on this as some recent critics).[45] Earlier in the poem, at *l*.15, Ovid had said, *non mihi mille placent, non sum desultor amoris*, and so on in the same vein down to *l*.18. And yet, in the mythological illustrations that follow, he implicitly compares himself to Jove.[46] But Jove, as is well known and as the exempla themselves make plain, was notoriously a *desultor amoris*. So it may be an implicit purpose of the exempla-series ironically to indicate to the reader what he would have suspected anyway, that Ovid's earlier protestations of fidelity were made tongue firmly in

---

44. *Cf.* W. Stroh, *Die Römische Liebeselegie als Werbende Dichtung*, Amsterdam 1971, p.155.

45. See L.C. Curran, '*Desultores Amoris*: Ovid 1.3', *CPh* 61, 1966, 47-9; the extraordinary article of A.W. Holleman, 'Notes on Ovid *Amores* 1.3 ...', *CPh* 65, 1970, 177-80 (he makes the equation Jupiter = Augustus!); K. Olstein, '*Amores* 1.3 and Duplicity as a Way of Love', *TAPhA* 105, 1975, 241-57.

46. Olstein, *ibid.*, keeps discussing the exempla-series in 21 ff. as if the main point of explicit comparison were between the poet and Jupiter - which of course it is not.

cheek.

After elaborately setting the scene against which the *Amores* are to be played out, Ovid eventually, in *Am.*I,5, introduces in person the object of his passion, Corinna. The first glimpse we are given of his mistress is dramatic -

> ecce, Corinna uenit tunica uelata recincta,
> candida diuidua colla tegente coma. (I,5,9 f.)

- and to enhance the impact of her arrival Ovid illustrates it with exempla:

> qualiter in thalamos formosa Sameramis isse
> dicitur et multis Lais amata uiris. (11 f.)

Most of the many points of contact here between *illustrans* and *illustrandum* are detailed by Barsby in his excellent commentary *ad loc.* He elucidates the significance of Corinna's *déshabillé* and informal coiffure in 9 f., then comments:

> '... the two ideas of this couplet, namely sexual provocation and beauty, are taken up and amplified in the next (11-12). The mention of the famous Assyrian queen, Semiramis, might suggest royal dignity, but Ovid concentrates on her beauty (*formosa*) with a hint of sexual promise (*in thalamos*); in the case of Lais, the celebrated Corinthian courtesan, who was also famed for her beauty, the emphasis is squarely on her amatory inclinations (*multis amata uiris*) ...'

I would only add to this that Ovid may have meant us to recall that Semiramis too was *multis amata uiris*.[47] Indeed, according to some accounts she was actually a lovely courtesan, just like Lais.[48]

Thus, through the details he includes in the examples (*in thalamos, formosa, multis amata uiris*) and

---

47. See Diodorus Siculus II,13,4: γῆμαι μὲν νομίμως οὐκ ἠθέλησεν ... ἐπιλεγομένη δὲ τῶν στρατιωτῶν τοὺς εὐπρεπείᾳ διαφέροντας τούτοις ἐμίσγετο ...

48. *Idem* II,19,3: Αθήναιος ... καί τινες τῶν ἄλλων συγγραφέων φασὶν αὐτὴν [*sc.* τὴν Σεμίραμιν] ἑταίραν γεγονέναι εὐπρεπῆ ...

the semi-mythological characters, Semiramis and Lais,[49] that are their subject, Ovid allows the exempla not only to illustrate the manner of Corinna's arrival in his room, but also to open up wider vistas. By means of the exempla in 11 f. Ovid gives us, on Corinna's very first appearance in his poetry, a hint of her character as he is to present it in this elegy and the elegies that follow, a hint of her sensuousness, her beauty, her imperiousness, her availability to many men. The economy, yet at the same time the richness, of the mythological illustrations remind us strongly of Propertius.

The last three references to myth to be examined in this chapter are all cases in which the mythological exemplum, introduced to illustrate some point connected with the elegist's personal experience, then makes a slight transition in the thought of the poem concerned. Exempla used for this purpose occurred frequently, as we saw in the previous chapter, in the *Elegies* of Propertius,[50] but in Ovid's *Amores* they are only occasionally to be found. The reason seems to be that, in general, Ovid is content to construct his elegies in discrete sections each one of which approaches the central theme of the particular elegy from a new distinct direction. He does not, therefore, need to be concerned about transitions.[51] So where exempla are used in the *Amores*, it is generally for a closely defined purpose - of illustration or wit or both - within a single circumscribed portion of the elegy; and it is only rarely that we should expect to find

---

49. Although they were historical personages Semiramis and Lais are treated by the elegists just like heroines of myth; cp. Propertius' references to them in III,11,21 ff. and II,6,1 f. respectively.

50. Above, Chapter 4, *passim*.

51. On these characteristics of Ovidian composition in the *Amores*, see G. Williams, *Tradition and Originality*, Oxford 1968, pp.512 f. and D. Parker, 'The Ovidian Coda', *Arion* 8, 1969, 80-97, pp.83 and 95.

myth functioning as a structural device to link two parts of a poem.[52]

We have already looked at some exempla in the opening section of *Am.*I,7, the elegy in which Ovid repents of having struck his girl.[53] But we must now examine the parallel drawn by the poet between himself and Diomedes in lines 31-4. The comparison here between Diomedes' and his own crime -

> pessima Tydides scelerum monimenta reliquit:
> ille deam primus perculit; alter ego. (I,7,31 f.)

- is prompted by the idea implicit in *l.*28 in the word *sacrilegae*, the idea of the poet's attack on his mistress as violence done to a deity. (This notion occurred earlier too in the couplet 5 f. and the exemplum of Orestes which illustrated it.) But immediately after the Diomedes-exemplum Ovid allows qualifications to suggest themselves:

> et minus ille nocens: mihi quam profitebar amare
> laesa est; Tydides saeuus in hoste fuit. (I,7,33 f.)

These qualifications are not meant simply to emphasize the poet's brutality - their primary function is to prepare the way for what follows. The sentence *Tydides saeuus in* hoste *fuit*, suggests to the elegist that he himself has actually treated one he professed to love as if she were his enemy. And this suggestion eases the transition to the following section of the poem (35-42), in which Ovid represents his subjugation of his girl in terms of a military triumph, albeit a hollow one. The extra, seemingly irrelevant, mythological detail of *l.*34 is thus seen to perform a useful structural function in the poem.

A similar function is performed by exempla

---

52. In addition to the three instances dealt with immediately below, something of a transitional function is performed also by exempla in *Am.*I,3, 21-4 and III,2,29 f. (see above, pp.199 ff. and 198 respectively).

53. Above, pp.180 ff.

involving the kisses of Phoebus and Diana, and of Venus and Mars, in II,5,27 f. -

> qualia credibile est non Phoebo ferre Dianam,
> sed Venerem Marti saepe tulisse suo.

- which are introduced to illustrate the thought of 25 f.:

> (oscula) qualia non fratri tulerit germana seuero,
> sed tulerit cupido mollis amica uiro.

What we should note here is the care which Ovid devotes to making myth and the thought it illustrates interlock exactly, and the skill with which he manipulates the development of his poem. Lines 25 f., just quoted, actually constitute a qualification of 23 f. which specify for the first time Corinna's 'crime' that the poet has been complaining about since the start of this elegy. But the couplet 25 f. is presented in such a way that mention in the next two lines of Phoebus' kisses given to Diana, and of Venus' bestowed on Mars, illustrate precisely *qualia non fratri tulerit germana seuero* (25) and (*qualia*) *tulerit cupido mollis amica uiro* (26) respectively. (At the same time Ovid introduces an element of variety into the exempla: he has Phoebus kiss his *germanam seueram*, rather than the sister her brother.) The elegist further includes an extra element in the second exemplum, an element not contained in the thought of 26, which it illumines. Venus was not simply Mars' *mollis amica*, the liaison between them was, notoriously, an adulterous one. This hint of adultery in the exemplum now enables Ovid to suggest, in the lines which follow (29-32), that Corinna's betrayal of him amounts to a violation of a quasi-marital bond between them. This suggestion is conveyed by phrases like *mea gaudia* (29), *dominas in mea iura manus* (30) and especially by the couplet 31 f.:

> haec tibi sunt mecum, mihi sunt communia tecum:
> in bona cur quisquam tertius ista uenit? (II,5,31 f.)

Ovid's reproaches could easily be those of the angry Vulcan to his adulterous wife.

In conclusion, we must return to another elegy

already touched on above (p.198), *Am.*III,2, Ovid's 'Day at the Races'. The mythological exemplum to be analyzed now, which is amusing in itself but also makes a slight transition in thought, occurs at *ll.*15 f. In the preceding lines Ovid has identified himself with his girl's favoured charioteer, and has imagined himself urging on his horses and then being stopped dead in his tracks by the sight of his lovely addressee. Now the poet wittily adapts myth to chime with this situation, as he exclaims:

> a, quam paene Pelops Pisaea concidit hasta,
> dum spectat uultus, Hippodamia, tuos! (III,2,15 f.)

Ovid has it that Pelops nearly came to grief through gazing at his bride-to-be, Hippodamia.[54] The myth is thus made to draw out the implications of the situation in which the poet has imagined himself to be. He does not explicitly state that he would be likely to come to grief if he stopped to look at his girl - he lets the exemplum do this for him. And by allowing these hints of disaster to emerge through the medium of the myth, Ovid is now able to make a transition to a new thought. The following line (17) dispels all doubt about Pelops' fate in the emphatic sentence: *nempe fauore suae uicit tamen ille puellae;* and by representing Pelops as having in fact won through, and that by his mistress' favour,[55] the poet prepares the way for the request - *uincamus dominae quisque fauore suae* (18) - which will (he hopes) dispel any doubt of his own success. *uincamus* here is deliberately ambiguous. On the one hand, referring to Ovid as the charioteer he has imagined himself to be and to the girl's actual charioteer, it means, 'May we win the race!'; on the other hand, for the poet as lover, it means, 'May I make my conquest!'

---

54. There *was* in existence a version of the myth according to which Pelops carried Hippodamia with him in his chariot (Brandt *ad loc.* refers us to Apollodorus *Epitome* 2,5); but that he gazed lovingly at her while racing for his life is an invention of Ovid's fancy.

55. It was Hippodamia who either advised Pelops to induce the charioteer Myrtilus to sabotage her father's chariot, or herself so induced him (see Brandt *ad loc.*).

CONCLUSION

We have now seen how the Roman love-elegists adopted into their personal poetry the techniques for handling the mythological exemplum which they found in the Hellenistic poets (and perhaps to a lesser degree also in earlier Greek poetry). It is unfortunate that the poetic remains of the Hellenistic period are so haphazard as to prevent the formulation of clear-cut conclusions here. We can only repeat that, on the evidence we do possess, it would seem that the catalogue-elegists had only a slight formal influence on the Roman elegists' handling of myth. And though it may have been the catalogue-elegists who, in the first instance, inspired the Roman elegists extensively to use myth in connexion with their personal experience, it appears to have been the poets of hymn, iambus, epic and pastoral, namely Callimachus, Apollonius Rhodius and Theocritus, who more strongly influenced their *manner* of treating mythological exempla. These Hellenistic poets, to whom *ars* was of such supreme importance, developed techniques which ensured that the exemplum, where it appeared in their poetry, was not a digressive or merely illustrative element, but essential to, and an integral part of, its context. To this end they paid very close attention to the structure of, and selection and shaping of detail within, the mythological exemplum; they frequently set up verbal echoes between myth and context, and mutually shaped both to fit exactly with each other.

It is precisely these techniques that we have seen to be employed in the poems of the Roman love-elegists: first in Catullus LXVIII (which, it was suggested, may have been the channel by which the influence of the Hellenistic poets reached the Augustan elegists), then particularly in the elegies of Tibullus and Propertius, and finally to a limited extent in the *Amores* of Ovid. To cite just a few examples from the material adduced in Chapters 3-5. Considerable care is devoted to the structure of the myth in Tibullus I,3,35-48 and 67-82;

Propertius I,1,9-16 and II,28,17-24. Skilful shaping and selection of detail within the mythological exemplum may be seen in Tibullus I,10,35-8 and II,3,11-28; Propertius I,2,15-20; I,15,9-22; and II,8,21-4; Ovid *Am.*I,3,21-4 and II,19,27-30. On a number of occasions the elegists were observed to create verbal echoes between the exemplum and its context in the poem, as in Tibullus I,3,35-40 (echoing *ll.*1;3 and 14); Propertius I,3,1-5 (echoed by 41-3); I,8,35 (echoing 32); and II,21,12 and 14 (echoing *ll.*4 and 8); Ovid I,3,21 (echoing 19 f.) and III,2,29 and 31 (echoing 27). And the elegists' conscious manipulation of myth and what they present as personal experience so that the two dovetail exactly, is to be traced in Tibullus I,10,7-10 (with 11-14), 19-24 (with 25-9); and II,3,71-6 (with 77 f.); Propertius I,3,41-6 (with 1-8); and II,28, 17-24 (with 15 f. and 25 f.); Ovid I,7,9 f. (with 5 f.). In using these various techniques to integrate myth fully into their personal poems, the elegists followed closely in the footsteps of their Hellenistic poetic predecessors.

It should be remarked that it is Tibullus and Propertius on whom the techniques just described had the most effect. They frequently used these means to enable myth not only to throw light upon the verses immediately surrounding it, but further to illuminate their personal situation as depicted in the poem as a whole, or to extend or make transitions in its thought. In all this they differed from Ovid who, as we saw, would generally use the mythological exemplum to create an immediate local effect, and then leave it to one side and pass on to some new aspect of his theme.

Another feature shared by Tibullus' and Propertius' handling of myth, is that these poets do not generally indicate the precise reason why a particular mythological episode is being introduced. Unlike Ovid they do not make a habit of leading into their exempla with an explanatory *sententia*. And as they offer no obvious explanation for their references to myth, the reader's

interest is immediately aroused. He feels invited to seek out for himself the unstated connexion between the myth and the elegist's personal situation, to interpret the one in the light of the other and vice versa. As a result, even where Tibullus and Propertius *do* make some specific explicit connexion between myth and personal experience, we expect to, and frequently do in fact, find other subtle and allusive links between the two. Furthermore, by not introducing their exempla in any obvious way, they stimulate the reader to extend his search for connexions beyond the immediate surroundings of the mythic reference into the wider context of the poem concerned.

Tibullus and Propertius have so far been discussed together because of the many similarities between their respective uses of myth to illumine personal experience. But we must not lose sight of the differences between them. The fact that both poets make myth blend in so well into their poems, but that their styles of writing elegy are so divergent, ensure that there must be differences. And this is what we find; we find that each of the elegists employs myth in his love-elegies in his own distinctive way, a way that harmonizes with the tone and manner of his poetry in general.

Thus Tibullus tends to develop his myths at some length (we think of the extensive mythological *tableaux* of I,3,35-48 and 59-82; and of the long exemplum in II,3,11-28; cp. further I,7,27-48 and II,5,39-54), and with a wealth of pictorial detail. He wishes thereby not only to throw light upon some aspect of his personal experience, but also to present the reader with a full picture of the Golden Age, the underworld, Apollo's sojourn in the country, or whatever it may be, simply for its own sake. So too in his elegies generally, Tibullus writes in a leisurely and expansive fashion, showing himself unafraid to digress, to dwell on vivid details which are not strictly necessary to their context, but which lend a completeness to the scene he happens to be describing. And the same tone - usually slightly

plaintive, sometimes gently humorous, occasionally forceful - informs equally myth and the context in which it is set.

Propertius, by contrast, rarely develops the myths of his personal elegies at length (I,20,17-50; II,18, 7-18; and III,15,11-44 are exceptional). Where he does introduce long mythological sections they are usually made up of a number of individual exempla (as in I,2,15-24; I,15,9-22; II,14,1-8; II,22A,25-34; II,26B,45-56). Propertius prefers to bring in mythic references that are highly compressed and elliptically narrated; he whittles his exempla down to the essentials, presenting to the reader only certain striking details necessary for the specific purpose he has in mind. This practice results, on occasion, in a certain (though never, I think, unfathomable) obscurity. But these characteristics of Propertius' mythological passages are shared by his poetry as a whole. Often, when the poet writes of his experience in love, he does so in an impressionistic and allusive manner. He selects from the range of his experience, for poetic treatment, only certain vivid and striking scenes, moods or moments. The reader is confronted with dramatic fragments from which he must reconstruct the continuum they once comprised. (This is not, of course, to deny that Propertius can, when he so wishes, compose simply and straightforwardly.) And again, as in Tibullus, the same Propertian tone unites myth and context - a tone which is urgent, querulous, strident, sometimes violent, but on occasion also graceful and elegant.

Tibullus and Propertius, then, share some characteristics in their treatment of myth, but differ to the extent to which their styles of writing elegy differ. Ovid is a case apart. The manner of handling the mythological exemplum developed by the major Hellenistic poets, seems to have had comparatively little influence on his *Amores*. Where Ovid was influenced by the poets of that period in his references to myth, it was rather by the epigrammatists. The Hellenistic authors of epigram, as

we saw, used myth chiefly as material out of which to fashion conceits and witty and amusing effects. Their aim was to delight the reader by setting a familiar mythological character or episode in a new and unexpected light. But this is exactly what we found Ovid doing on numerous occasions in his *Amores*. We recall, for example, his versions of the myth of Penelope (I,8,47 f. and III,4,23 f.); his references to the loves and transformations of Jupiter (I,3,21 ff.; I,10,3 f. and 7 f.; II,19,27 ff.; III,4,19 ff.; III, 8,29 ff.); and his exploitation of proverbial figures such as Hippolytus and Priapus (II,4,31 f.); Nestor and Tithonus (III,7,41 f.); Phemius and Thamyras (III, 7,61 f.). In these cases it was quite clear that, even though the mythological examples purported to arise in some way from, or to illustrate, the 'personal' experience of the poet or his mistress, their main purpose was in reality to shock and/or amuse the reader.

The other main way in which Ovid used mythological exempla in his *Amores* was as a means convincingly to illustrate or prove a given point. This more conventional and rhetorical use of exempla is perhaps less appealing, less effective, than Ovid's use of myth for purposes of wit. However, the poet did quite often enliven with wit longish exempla-series which would otherwise have been straightforwardly illustrative or probative, thus preventing them from boring the reader. A further striking feature of the elegist's illustrative uses of myth was that they were frequently introduced by a short succinctly-worded *sententia* or gnome. This had the effect of concentrating the reader's attention on a single aspect only of the exempla which followed - namely that aspect which illustrated the preceding gnome. Tibullus and Propertius did not as a rule use generalizing introductory maxims of this type; instead they let the reader seek out for himself the often unobvious and far-reaching links between myth and their experience. But Ovid prefers, by the technique just described, to achieve perfect clarity within a circumscribed area,

even if this means sacrificing more complex wider-ranging effects.

Although Ovid's treatment of myth is very different from that of the earlier elegists, nevertheless it too harmonizes well with his distinctive manner of writing elegy. So far as Ovid's witty mythological exempla are concerned, it is above all a similarity of *tone* that blends them into their context. A flippant irreverent wit is to be found at work everywhere in the *Amores*. Ovid's witty allusions to myth are merely one more means by which the poet seeks to create and sustain this light bantering tone of his elegies as a whole.

Another important general element of Ovid's style is his impulse towards clearness and also completeness of exposition. He likes to take a theme and approach it from many different angles, systematically extrapolating its possibilities through a series of clearly articulated sections. Here again exempla subserve a general stylistic tendency. Ovid uses exempla, both mythological and other (see p.175 and n.5) as a means to illustrate, to expand and vary, the different themes of his *Amores*. And by frequently prefacing those exempla with a clearly-worded *sententia* or gnome, Ovid defines their function precisely and lends them the same clarity that is to be found in their context.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

TEXTS, COMMENTARIES, TRANSLATIONS, ETC.

Greek Poets

ARDIZZONI, A., *Le Argonautiche Libro III, Testo, Traduzione e Commentario*, Bari 1958.

DAWSON, C.M., *The Iambi of Callimachus, A Hellenistic Poet's Experimental Laboratory*, *YClS* 11, 1950, 3-168 (The *Iambi* edd. with comm.).

DOVER, K.J., *Theocritus, Select Poems edited with Introduction and Commentary*, London 1971.

FRÄNKEL, H., *Apollonii Rhodii Argonautica* (OCT), Oxford 1961.

———, *Noten zu den Argonautika des Apollonios*, Munich 1968.

GOW, A.S.F., *Theocritus, edited with a Translation and Commentary* (2 vols.), Cambridge 1952².

———, *Bucolici Graeci* (OCT), Oxford 1952.

GOW, A.S.F. and PAGE, D.L., *The Greek Anthology, Hellenistic Epigrams, edited with Introduction, Text and Commentary* (2 vols.), Cambridge 1965.

———, *The Greek Anthology, The Garland of Philip, edited with Introduction, Text and Commentary* (2 vols.), Cambridge 1968.

HILLER, E., *Theokrits Gedichte, Erklärt von H. Fritzsche, dritte Auflage besorgt von. E.H.*, Leipzig 1881.

MOONEY, G.W., *The Argonautica of Apollonius Rhodius, edited with Introduction and Commentary*, Dublin 1912.

PFEIFFER, R., *Callimachus I: Fragmenta*, Oxford 1949.

———, *Callimachus II: Hymni et Epigrammata*, Oxford 1953.

POWELL, J.U., *Collectanea Alexandrina, Reliquiae Minores Poetarum Graecorum Aetatis Ptolemaicae*, Oxford 1925.

TRYPANIS, C.A., *Callimachus, Fragments: Text, Translation and Notes* (Loeb), Cambridge Mass. 1958.

VIAN, F., *Apollonios de Rhodes, Argonautiques Chant III, Edition, Introduction et Commentaire de F.V.* (Coll. Erasme), Paris 1961.

———, *Apollonios de Rhodes, Argonautiques Chants I - II, Texte Etabli et Commenté par F.V. et Traduit par E. Delage* (Budé), Paris 1976.

WALZ, P., *Anthologie Grecque, Première Partie Anthologie Palatine, Tome II (Livre V), Texte Etabli et Traduit par P.W. en Collaboration avec J. Guillon* (Budé), Paris 1960.

WEST, M.L., *Iambi et Elegi Graeci ante Alexandrum Cantati* (2 vols.), Oxford 1971-2.

WYSS, B., *Antimachi Colophonii Reliquiae Collegit Disposuit Explicavit B.W.*, Berlin 1936.

Catullus

FORDYCE, C.J., *Catullus, a Commentary*, Oxford 1961.

KROLL, W., *Gaius Valerius Catullus, Herausgegeben und Erklärt von W.K.*, Stuttgart 1968[5].

MYNORS, R.A.B., *C. Valerii Catulli Carmina* (OCT), Oxford 1958.

QUINN, K., *Catullus, The Poems, edited with Introduction, Revised Text and Commentary*, London 1973[2].

Tibullus

DISSEN, L., *Albi Tibulli Carmina ex Recensione Car. Lachmanni passim mutata explicavit L.D.*, Göttingen 1835.

LEE, G., *Tibullus: Elegies, edited and translated by G.L.*, Cambridge 1975.

LENZ, F.W. and GALINSKY, G.K., *Albii Tibulli Aliorumque Carminum Libri Tres (Text)*, Leiden 1971[3].

PONCHONT, M., *Tibulle et les Auteurs du Corpus Tibullianum, Texte Etabli et Traduit par M.P.* (Budé), Paris 1950[3].

POSTGATE, J.P., *Tibulli Aliorumque Carminum Libri Tres* (OCT), Oxford 1915[2].

——— , *Selections from Tibullus (Text and Commentary)*, London 1910[2].

PUTNAM, M., *Tibullus, a Commentary*, Norman (Oklahoma) 1973.

SMITH, K.F., *The Elegies of Albius Tibullus, edited with Introduction and Notes*, New York 1913.

Propertius

BARBER, E.A., *Sexti Propertii Carmina* (OCT), Oxford 1960[2].

BUTLER, H.E. and BARBER, E.A., *The Elegies of Propertius, edited with Introduction and Commentary*, Oxford 1933.

CAMPS, W.A., *Propertius Elegies, Books I, II, III and IV* (edited with Introduction and Commentary), Cambridge, Bk.I 1961, Bk.II 1967, Bk.III 1966, Bk.IV 1965.

ENK, P.J., *Ad Propertii Carmina Commentarius Criticus*, Zutphen 1911.

ENK, P.J., *Sex. Propertii Elegiarum Liber I (Monobiblos) cum Prolegomenis, Notis Criticis, Commentario Exegetico edidit P.J.E.* (2 vols.), Leiden 1946.

——— , *Sex. Propertii Elegiarum Liber Secundus cum Prolegomenis, Notis Criticis, Commentario Exegetico edidit P.J.E.* (2 vols.), Leiden 1962.

HERZBERG, G.A.B., *Sex. Aurelii Propertii Elegiarum Libri Quattuor. Quaestionum Propertianarum Libris Tribus et Commentariis illustravit G.A.B.H.* (4 vols.), Halle 1843-5.

KUINOEL, C.T., *Sexti Aurelii Propertii Carmina recensuit et illustravit C.T.K.* (2 vols.), Leipzig 1805.

ROTHSTEIN, M., *Die Elegien des Sex. Propertius, Erklärt von M.R.* (2 parts), Berlin 1920^2 and 1924^2.

Ovid

BARSBY, J.A., *Ovids Amores Book One, edited with Translation and Running Commentary*, Oxford 1973.

BORNECQUE, H., *Ovide, Les Amours, Texte Etabli et Traduit par H.B.* (Budé), Paris 1968^4.

BRANDT, P., *P. Ovidi Nasonis Amorum Libri Tres, Erklärt von P.B.* (Text, Commentary, extensive Appendices), Leipzig 1911.

KENNEY, E.J., *P. Ovidi Nasonis Amores, Medicamina Faciei Femineae, Ars Amatoria, Remedia Amoris* (OCT), Oxford 1961.

LEE, G., *Ovid's Amores, English Translation with Latin Text*, London 1968.

MUNARI, F., *P. Ovidi Nasonis, Amores, Testo, Introduzione, Traduzione e Note*, Florence 1970^5.

BOOKS, ARTICLES, ETC.

(The abbreviations for journal-titles are those of *L'Année Philologique*.)

ABEL, W., *Die Anredeformen bei den römischen Elegikern. Untersuchungen zur elegischen Form*, diss. Berlin 1930.

AHL, F.M., 'Propertius I,1', *WS* 8, 1974, 80-98.

ALEWELL, K., *Über das rhetorische* παράδειγμα *in der römischen Literatur der Kaiserzeit. Theorie, Beispielsammlungen, Verwendung*, diss. Kiel 1912, published Leipzig 1913.

ALFONSI, L., 'Ancora Sull' Elegia XV del Primo Libro di Properzio', *SIFC* 17, 1940, 123-35.

——— , *L'Elegia di Properzio*, Milan 1945.

——— , *Albio Tibullo e Gli Autori del 'Corpus Tibullianum'*, Milan 1946.

ALFONSI, L., 'La Prima Elegia del I Libro di Properzio' (in MISCELLANEA Properziana (*q.v.*), pp.7-20).

ALLEN, A.W., 'Elegy and the Classical Attitude toward Love: Propertius I,1', *YClS* 11, 1950, 255-77.

——— , 'Sunt Qui Propertium Malint' (in SULLIVAN (ed.), *Critical Essays*, pp.107-48).

——— , 'Cynthia's Bedside Manner', *Phoenix* 27, 1973, 381-5.

ARNALDI, F., 'La "retorica" nella poesia di Ovidio' (in HERESCU (ed.), *Ovidiana*, pp.23-31).

ATTI *del Convegno Internazionale Ovidiano* (held at Sulmona 1958, 2 vols.), Rome 1959.

BARDON, H., 'Ovide et le Baroque' (in HERESCU (ed.), *Ovidiana*, pp.75-100).

BARWICK, K., 'Zur Interpretation von Properz 2,15 und 14', *Philologus* 99, 1955, 112-32.

BAYET, J., 'Catulle, la Grèce et Rome' (in FONDATION *Hardt* (*q.v.*) vol.II, pp.3-39).

BENNETT, A.W., 'The Elegiac Lie: Propertius I.15', *Phoenix* 26, 1972, 28-39.

BERMAN, K., 'Some Propertian Imitations in Ovid's *Amores*', *CPh* 67, 1972, 170-7.

BINNS, J.W. (ed.), *Ovid* ('Classical Literature and its Influence' series), London and Boston 1973.

BIRT, T., 'Die vaticanische Ariadne und die dritte Elegie des Properz', *RhM* 50, 1895, 31-65, 161-90.

BOUCHER, J.-P., *Etudes sur Properce, Problèmes d'Inspiration et d'Art*, Paris 1965.

——— , *Gaius Cornelius Gallus*, Paris 1966.

BOWRA, C.M., *Early Greek Elegists*, Cambridge 1938.

BOYANCE, P., 'Properce' (in FONDATION *Hardt* (*q.v.*) vol.II, pp.169-222).

BREGUET, E., 'Les Elégies de Gallus d'après la X^e *Bucolique* de Virgile', REL 26, 1948, 204-14.

BRIGHT, D.F., 'A Tibullan Odyssey', *Arethusa* 4, 1971, 197-214.

——— , *Haec Mihi Fingebam, Tibullus in his World*, Leiden 1978.

BÜCHNER, K., 'Ovids Amores' (in *Gedenkschrift für Georg Rhode*, hrsgb. G. Radke, Tübingen 1961, pp.57-81).

BULLOCH, A.W., 'Tibullus and the Alexandrians', *PCPhS* 199, 1973, 71-89.

BURCK, E., 'Römische Wesenszüge der Augusteischen Liebeselegie', *Hermes* 80, 1952, 163-200.

——— , *Römische Liebesdichtung* (Veröffentlichungen der Schleswig-Holsteinischen Universitätsgesellschaft no.29), Kiel 1961.

CAHEN, E., *Callimaque et son Oeuvre Poétique*, Paris 1929.

CAIRNS, F., 'Propertius, 2.30 A and B', *CQ* 21, 1971, 204-13.

——— , *Generic Composition in Greek and Roman Poetry*, Edinburgh 1971.

——— , 'Some Observations on Propertius 1.1', *CQ* 24, 1974, 94-110.

CAMERON, A., 'The first edition of Ovid's *Amores*', *CQ* 18, 1968, 320-33.

CAMPBELL, C., 'Tibullus: Elegy I,3', *YClS* 23, 1973, 147-57.

CILLIERS, J.F., 'The Tartarus Motif in Tibullus' Elegy 1.3', *AClass* 17, 1974, 75-9.

CONNOR, P.J., '*Saevitia Amoris:* Propertius 1.1', *CPh* 67, 1972, 51-4.

COPLEY, F.O., '*Servitium Amoris* in the Roman Elegists', *TAPhA* 78, 1947, 285-300.

——— , 'The Unity of Catullus 68: a further view', *CPh* 52, 1957, 29-32.

COPPEL, B., *Das Alliusgedicht*, Heidelberg 1973.

COURTNEY, E., 'Three Poems of Propertius', *BICS* 16, 1969, 70-87.

CROWTHER, N.B., 'Parthenius and Roman Poetry', *Mnemosyne* 29, 1976, 65-71.

CURRAN, L.C., 'Ovid *Amores* 1.10', *Phoenix* 18, 1964, 314-9.

——— , '*Desultores Amoris:* Ovid *Amores* I.3', *CPh* 61, 1966, 47-9.

——— , 'Vision and Reality in Propertius I.3', *YClS* 19, 1966, 189-207.

——— ,'"Nature to Advantage Dressed": Propertius 1.2', *Ramus* 4, 1975, 1-16.

DAWSON, C.M., *Romano-Campanian Landscape Painting* (*YClS* 9), New Haven 1944.

DAY, A.A., *The Origins of Latin Love Elegy*, Oxford 1938.

D'ELIA, S., 'Il Problema Cronologico Degli Amores', (in HERESCU (ed.), *Ovidiana*, pp.210-23).

DE SAINT DENIS, E., 'Le Malicieux Ovide' (in HERESCU (ed.), *Ovidiana*, pp.184-200).

DESIDERI, S., 'Il preziosismo mitologico di Properzio', *GIF* 11, 1958, 327-36.

DEUBNER, L., 'Ein Stilprinzip hellenistischer Dichtkunst', *NJA* 47, 1921, 361-78.

DICKSON, T.W., 'Borrowed Themes in Ovid's *Amores*', *CJ* 59, 1964, 175-80.

DONINI, V., 'In Ovidi *Amor.*III 6 adnotationes', *Latinitas* 17, 1969, 210-22.

DONNET, D., 'Ovide, Properce et L'Elégie Latine', *LEC* 33, 1965, 253-79.

DORNSEIFF, F., 'Literarische Verwendungen des Beispiels', *VBW* 4, 1924/5, 206-28.

DUCKWORTH, G.E., *Foreshadowing and Suspense, in the Epics of Homer, Apollonius, and Vergil*, Princeton 1933.

DUQUESNAY, I.M. LE M., 'The Amores' (in BINNS (ed.), *Ovid*, pp.1-48).

EISENBERGER, H., 'Der Innere Zusammenhang der Motive in Tibulls Gedicht I,3', *Hermes* 88, 1960, 188-97.

ELDER, J.P., 'Tibullus: Tersus atque Elegans' (in SULLIVAN (ed.), *Critical Essays*, pp.65-105).

ELLIOTT, A.G., '*Amores* 1.13: Ovid's Art', *CJ* 69, 1973, 127-32.

ELTER, A., 'Eine Elegie des Tibull (I,3)', *RhM* 61, 1906, 267-82.

ENK, P.J., 'The Unity of Some Elegies of Propertius', *Latomus* 15, 1956, 181-92.

FEDELI, P., 'Properzio I,3. Interpretazione e proposte sull' origine dell' elegia latina', *MH* 31, 1974, 23-41.

FONDATION *Hardt, Entretiens* Vol.II, 'L'Influence Grecque sur la Poésie Latine', Geneva 1956.

FRAENKEL, E., 'Die Klassische Dichtung der Römer' (in *Das Problem des Klassischen und die Antike*, hrsgb. von W. Jaeger, Stuttgart 1933 - deals with Propertius I,3).

FRÄNKEL, H., *Ovid: a Poet between Two Worlds* (Sather Classical Lectures vol.XVIII), Berkeley and Los Angeles 1945.

——— , *Dichtung und Philosophie des frühen Griechentums*, Munich 1962[2].

FRECAUT, J.-M., *L'Esprit et L'Humour chez Ovide*, Grenoble 1972.

GALINSKY, K., 'The Triumph Theme in the Augustan Elegy', *WS* 82, 1969, 75-107.

GIOMINI, R., 'Ricerche Sulle Due Edizioni Degli "Amores"' (in ATTI (*q.v.*), pp.125-42).

GREEN, P., 'Venus Clerke Ovyde' (in *Essays in Antiquity*, London 1960, pp.109-35).

GRIMAL, P., 'Vénus et L'Immortalité (A propos de Tibulle I,3,37 [should be I,3,57] et suiv.)' (in *Hommages à W. Deonna, Coll. Latomus* 28, Brussels 1957, pp.258-62).

HÄNDEL, P., *Beobachtungen zur Epischen Technik des Apollonios Rhodios* (*Zetemata 7*) Munich 1954.

HANSLIK, R., 'Tibulls Elegie I,3' (in *Forschungen zur Römischen Literatur, Festschrift Büchner*, hrsgb. von W. Wimmel, Wiesbaden 1970, pp.138-45).

——— , 'Zum ersten Gedicht der Monobiblos des Properz', *WS* 10, 1976, 186-98.

HARMON, D.P., 'Myth and Proverb in Propertius 2.8', *CW* 68, 1975, 417-24.

HARRAUER, H., *A Bibliography to the Corpus Tibullianum*, Hildesheim 1971.

——— , *A Bibliography to Propertius*, Hildesheim 1973.

HEILMANN, W., *Die Bedeutung der Venus bei Tibull, unter besonderer Berücksichtigung von Horaz und Properz*, diss. Frankfurt 1959.

HEINZE, R., *Ovids Elegische Erzählung (Berichte über die Verhandlungen der Sächs. Akad. d. Wiss. zu Leipzig. Philol.-hist. Klass.* 71 Bd. 7 Heft) Leipzig 1919.

HELBIG, W., *Untersuchungen über die Campanische Wandmalerei*, Leipzig 1873.

HENDERSON, A.A.R., 'Tibullus, Elysium and Tartarus', *Latomus* 28, 1969, 649-53.

HENSEL, L., *Weissagungen in der Alexandrinischen Poesie*, diss. Giessen 1908.

HERESCU, N.I. (ed.), *Ovidiana, Recherches sur Ovide*, Paris 1958.

HERING, W., 'Properz I,3', *WS* 85, 1972, 45-78.

——— , 'Quid haec elegia sibi velit, non ita facile dictu, Ein Beitrag zum Verständnis von Properz I,1', *Philologus* 114, 1970, 99-117.

HERTER, H., 'Beiträge zu Apollonios von Rhodos', *RhM* 91, 1942, 226-49.

——— , 'Hellenismus und Hellenentum' (in *Das Neue Bild der Antike, Bd.I : Hellas*, hrsgb. von H. Berve, Leipzig 1942, pp.334-53).

HERWIG-HAGER, G., 'Goethes Properz-Begegnung, "Der Besuch" und Properz I,3' (in *Synusia, Festgabe für W. Schadewaldt*, hrsgb. von H. Flashar und K. Gaiser, Pfullingen 1965, pp.429-53).

HIGHAM, T.F., 'Ovid: Some Aspects of his Character and Aims', *CR* 68, 1934, 105-16.

——— , 'Ovid and Rhetoric' (in HERESCU (ed.), *Ovidiana*, pp.32-48).

HOLLEMAN, A.W., 'Notes on Ovid *Amores* 1.3 ...', *CPh* 65, 1970, 177-80.

HOWALD, E., *Der Dichter Kallimachos von Kyrene*, Erlenbach-Zurich 1943.

HUBBARD, M., *Propertius* (in 'Classical Life and Letters' series), London 1974.

HURST, A., *Apollonios de Rhodes, Manière et Cohérence, Contribution a l'Etude de l'Esthetique Alexandrine*, Rome 1967.

JACOBY, F., 'Zur Entstehung der römischen Elegie', *RhM* 60, 1905, 38-105.

JÄKEL, S., 'Beobachtungen zur dramatischen Komposition von Ovids Amores', *A&A* 16, 1970, 12-28.

KARSTEN, H.T., 'De Tibulli Elegiarum Structura', *Mnemosyne* 16, 1888, 39-77.

KEYSSNER, K., 'Die bildende Kunst bei Properz', *Würzburger Studien* 13, Stuttgart 1938, pp.169-88 (= *Properz, Wege der Forschung*, bd. CCXXXVII, hrsgb. von W. Eisenhut, Darmstadt 1975, pp.264-86).

KHAN, H. AKBAR, '*Ovidius Furens*: A Revaluation of *Amores* I,7', *Latomus* 25, 1966, 880-94.

KINSEY, T.E., 'Some Problems in Catullus 68', *Latomus* 26, 1967, 35-53.

KIRK, G.S., *Myth, Its Meaning and Functions in Ancient and other Cultures*, Cambridge, Berkeley and Los Angeles 1970.

——— , *The Nature of Greek Myths*, Harmondsworth 1974.

KLEINKNECHT, H., 'Λουτρὰ τῆς Παλλάδος', *Hermes* 74, 1939, 301-50.

KLINGER, F., *Properzens Elegie Qualis Thesea*, Passau (n.d. but c. 1966).

KNOCHE, U., 'Gedanken und Vorschläge zur Interpretation von Properzens Gedicht 2,28 (in MISCELLANEA *Properziana* (*q.v.*), pp.49-70).

——— , 'Erlebnis und dichterischer Ausdruck in der lateinischen Poesie' *Gymnasium* 65, 1958, 146-65.

KÖHNKEN, A., *Die Funktion des Mythos bei Pindar*, Berlin and New York 1971.

KÖLMEL, B.W., *Die Funktion des Mythologischen in der Dichtung des Properz*, diss. (typescript) Heidelberg 1957.

KÖRTE, A. and HÄNDLEL, P., *Die Hellenistiche Dichtung*, Stuttgart 1960.

KRATINS, O., 'The Pretended Witch: A Reading of Ovid's *Amores*, I, viii', *PhQ* 42, 1963, 151-8.

KRAUS, W., 'Der Gott der Liebenden', *WS* 79, 1966, 399-405.

KREFELD, H., *Liebe, Landleben und Krieg bei Tibull* diss. Marburg 1952, published Düsseldorf 1954.

KRILL, R.M., 'Mythology in the Amatory Works of Ovid' (in *Ovidianum. Acta conventus ... ovidianis studiis fovendis*, edd. N. Barbu, E. Dobroiu, M. Nasta, Bucharest 1976, pp.365-71).

LA PENNA, A., *Properzio, Saggio Critico Seguito da due Richerche Filologiche*, Florence 1951.

——— , *L'Integrazione Difficile, Un Profilo di Properzio*, Turin 1977.

LAUSBERG, H., *Handbuch der Literarischen Rhetorik, Eine Grundlegung der Literaturwissenschaft* (2 vols.) Munich 1973^2.

LAWALL, G., *Theocritus' Coan Pastorals, A Poetry Book*, Cambridge Mass. 1967.

LEE, G., 'Tenerorum Lusor Amorum' (in SULLIVAN (ed.), *Critical Essays*, pp.149-79).

LEGRAND, P.-E., *Etude sur Théocrite*, Paris 1898.

LEO, F., *Über einige Elegien Tibulls (Philologische Untersuchungen* vol.II) Berlin 1881.

LESKY, A., *A History of Greek Literature*, London 1966.

LIEBERG, G., 'L'Elegia I,3 di Properzio', *GIF* 14, 1961, 308-26.

———, *Puella Divina. Die Gestalt der göttlichen Geliebten bei Catull im Zusammenhang der Antiken Dichtung*, Amsterdam 1962.

———, 'Die Mythologie des Properz in der Forschung und die Idealisierung Cynthias', *RhM* 112, 1969, 311-47.

LILJA, S., *The Roman Elegists' Attitude to Women*, Helsinki 1965.

LUCK, G., *The Latin Love Elegy*, London 1969^2.

LYNE, R.O.A.M., 'Propertius and Cynthia: Elegy 1.3', *PCPhS* 196, 1970, 60-78.

MAASS, E., 'Tibullische Sagen', *Hermes* 18, 1883, 321-42.

McKAY, K.J., *The Poet at Play, Kallimachos, the Bath of Pallas (Mnemosyne Suppl.* VI) Leiden 1962.

MACLEOD, C.W., 'A Use of Myth in Ancient Poetry', *CQ* 24, 1974, 82-93.

MARG, W., 'Ovids Amores - Dichter und Dichtung', (in *Ovid, Wege der Forschung*, bd. XCII, hrsgb. von M. v. Albrecht und E. Zinn, Darmstadt 1968, pp.295-312).

MARTINI, E., *Einleitung zu Ovid*, Brün, Prague, Leipzig, Vienna, 1933.

MEINCKE, W., *Untersuchungen zu den Enkomiastischen Gedichten Theokrits, Ein Beitrag zum Verständnis hellenistischer Dichtung und des antiken Herrscherenkomions*, diss. Kiel 1965.

MISCELLANEA *Properziana (Atti dell' Accad. Prop. del Subasio*, vol. 5) Assisi 1957.

NEUMANN, R., *Qua Ratione Ovidius in Amoribus Scribendis Properti Elegiis Usus Sit*, diss. Göttingen 1919.

NEWMAN, J.K., *Augustus and the New Poetry (Coll. Latomus* 88) Brussels 1967.

NILSSON, M.P., *Geschichte der Griechischen Religion (Handbuch d. Altertumswissenschaft* bd.II, hrsgb. von W. Otto) Munich 1961^2.

NILSSON, N.-O., 'Zu Erklärung von Properz II,30', *Eranos* 45, 1947, 37-58.

ÖHLER, R., *Mythologische Exempla in der älteren griechischen Dichtung* diss. Basel 1925, published Aarau 1925.

OLSTEIN, K., '*Amores* 1.3 and Duplicity as a Way of Love', *TAPhA* 105, 1975, 241-57.

OTIS, B., 'Ovid and the Augustans', *TAPhA* 69, 1938, 188-229.

OTTO, A., *De Fabulis Propertianis*, Ist part, diss. Breslau 1880; IInd part, *Programm des Katholischen Gymnasium*, Gross-Glogau 1886.

PARKER, D., 'The Ovidian Coda', *Arion* 8, 1969, 80-97.

PEPE, L., *Tibullo Minore*, Naples 1948.

PESCANI, P., 'Un disticho interpolato nella elegia 15ª del primo libro di Properzio', *SIFC* 15, 1938, 323-28.

PETERSEN, B., *Kommentar zu Tibull's Todes-Elegie (I.3)* diss. (typescript) Freiburg im Breisgau 1952.

PFEIFFER, R., *Die Neuen* ΔΙΗΓΗΣΕΙΣ *zu Kallimachosgedichten* (*SBA* bd.10), Munich 1934.

———, 'The Future of Studies in the Field of Hellenistic Poetry' *JHS* 75, 1955, 69-73.

———, *Ausgewählte Schriften*, ed. W. Bühler, Munich 1960.

———, *History of Classical Scholarship, From the Beginnings to the end of the Hellenistic Age*, Oxford 1968.

PRESCOTT, H.W., 'The Unity of Catullus LXVIII', *TAPhA* 71, 1940, 473-500.

PUELMA, M., *Lucilius und Kallimachos, Zur Geschichte einer Gattung der Hellenistisch-Römischen Poesie*, Frankfurt am Main 1949.

———, 'Die Vorbilder der Elegiendichtung in Alexandrien und Rom', *MH* 11, 1954, 101-16.

QUINN, K., *Latin Explorations, Critical Studies in Roman Literature*, London 1963.

REITZENSTEIN, E., 'Das Neue Kunstwollen in den Amores Ovids', *RhM* 84, 1935, 62-88.

———, *Wirklichkeitsbild und Gefühlsentwicklung bei Properz (Philologus Suppl.* 29,2) Leipzig 1936.

REITZENSTEIN, R., 'Properz-Studien', *Hermes* 31, 1896, 185-220.

———, 'Noch Einmal Tibulls Erste Elegie', *Hermes* 47, 1912, 60-116 (deals also with Propertius I,19).

RENZ, H., *Mythologische Beispiele in Ovids erotischer Elegie*, diss. Tübingen 1931, published Würzburg 1935.

RIPERT, E., *Ovide, Poète de l'Amour, des Dieux et de l'Exil*, Paris 1921.

RIZZO, G.E., *La Pittura Ellenistico-Romana*, Milan 1929.

ROHDE, G., 'Propertiana' (in his *Studien und Interpretationen*, Berlin 1963, pp.167-70).

ROSCHER, W.H., *Ausführliches Lexikon der Griechischen und Römischen Mythologie*, Leipzig 1884-90.

———, 'Die Enneadischen und Hebdomadischen Fristen und Wochen der Ältesten Griechen', *ASG* 21, 4, 1903.

ROSENMEYER, T.G., *The Green Cabinet, Theocritus and the European Pastoral Lyric*, Berkeley and Los Angeles 1969.

ROSS, D.O., *Backgrounds to Augustan Poetry: Gallus Elegy and Rome*, Cambridge 1975.

ROSTAGNI, A., 'L'influenza greca sulle origini dell' elegia erotica latina' (in FONDATION *Hardt* (*q.v.*), vol.II, pp.59-90).

RUDD, N., *Lines of Enquiry, Studies in Latin Poetry*, Cambridge 1976.

SAYLOR, C.F., *Propertius and Main Themes of Roman Amatory Thought*, diss. (typescript) Berkeley 1968.

SCHÄFER, E., *Das Verhältnis von Erlebnis und Kunstgestalt bei Catull* (*Hermes Einselschr.* 18), Wiesbaden 1966.

SCHÖNE, W., *De Propertii Ratione Fabulas Adhibendi* diss. Leipzig 1911.

SCHUSTER, M., *Tibull-Studien. Beiträge zur Erklärung und Kritik Tibulls und des Corpus Tibullianum*, Vienna 1930.

SECHI, M., 'Nota a Properzio I,3', *Maia* 6, 1953, 208-13.

SELLAR, W.Y., *The Roman Poets of the Augustan Age: Horace and the Elegiac Poets*, Oxford 1892.

SHACKLETON BAILEY, D.R., *Propertiana*, Cambridge 1956.

SKUTSCH, F., *Aus Vergil's Frühzeit*, Leipzig 1901.

SOLMSEN, F., 'Tibullus as an Augustan Poet', *Hermes* 90, 1962, 295-325.

SPIES, A., *Militat Omnis Amans, Ein Beitrag zur Bildersprache der Antiken Erotik*, diss. Tübingen 1928, published Tübingen 1930.

STEIDLE, W., 'Das Motiv der Lebenswahl bei Tibull und Properz', *WS* 75, 1962, 100-40.

STIRRUP, B., 'Irony in Ovid *Amores* I,7', *Latomus* 32, 1973, 824-31.

STOESSL, F., *Apollonios Rhodios, Interpretationen zur Erzählungskunst und Quellenverwertung*, Berne and Leipzig 1941.

———, *Ovid Dichter und Mensch*, Berlin 1959.

STROH, W., *Die Römische Liebeselegie als Werbende Dichtung*, Amsterdam 1971.

SUITS, T.A., 'Mythology, Address, and Structure in Propertius 2.8', *TAPhA* 96, 1965, 427-37.

SULLIVAN, J.P., 'Castas Odisse Puellas: A Reconsideration of Propertius I,1', *WS* 74, 1961, 96-112.

——— , 'Two Problems in Roman Love Elegy', *TAPhA* 92, 1961, 522-36.

——— (ed.), *Critical Essays in Roman Literature, Elegy and Lyric*, London 1962.

——— , *Ezra Pound and Sextus Propertius, A Study in Creative Translation*, London 1965.

——— , *Propertius, A Critical Introduction*, Cambridge 1976.

TOMASZUK, P.V., *A Romantic Interpretation of Propertius: Vincenzo Padula*, Aquila 1971 (contains full Latin text, with translation into English, of Padula's *Pauca Quae in Sexto Aurelio Propertio V.P. ab Acrio Animadvertabat*, Naples 1871).

THOMAS, E., 'Variations on a Military Theme in Ovid's *Amores*', *G&R* 10, 1963, 151-65.

——— , 'Ovid at the Races. *Amores*, III,2; *Ars Amatoria*, I,135-164' (in *Hommages à M. Renard, Coll. Latomus* 101-3, 3 vols., Brussels 1969, Vol. I, pp.710-24).

TRÄNKLE, H., *Die Sprachkunst des Properz und die Tradition der Lateinischen Dichtersprache* (*Hermes Einzelschr.* 15) Wiesbaden 1960.

TREMOLI, P., *Influssi Retorici e Ispirazione Poetica negli "Amores" di Ovidio*, Trieste 1955.

TRÜB, H., *Kataloge in der Griechische Dichtung*, diss. Zurich 1952.

VAIO, J., 'The Authenticity and Relevance of Propertius 2.14.29-32', *CPh* 57, 1962, 236-8.

WATTS, W.J., 'Ovid, The Law and Roman Society on Abortion', *AClass* 16, 1973, 89-101.

WHEELER, A.L., 'Erotic Teaching in Roman Elegy and the Greek Sources', Part I: *CPh* 5, 1910, 440-50; Part II: *CPh* 6, 1911, 56-77.

——— , *Catullus and the Traditions of Ancient Poetry* (Sather Classical Lectures IX), Berkeley and Los Angeles 1934.

WHITE, R.E., 'The Structure of Propertius 2.28: Dramatic Unity', *TAPhA* 89, 1958, 254-61.

WIGHT DUFF, J., *A Literary History of Rome, From the Origins to the Close of the Golden Age*, London 1960^{2}.

WILAMOWITZ, U. von, *Sappho und Simonides, Untersuchungen über Griechische Lyriker*, Berlin 1913.

——— , *Hellenistische Dichtung in der Zeit des Kallimachos* (2 vols.), Berlin 1924.

WILHELM, F., 'Tibulliana', *RhM* 59, 1904, 279-93.

——— , 'Zu Ovid Am.III,6', *PhW*, 1933, cols. 141-4 and 169-73.

WILKINSON, L.P., 'Greek Influence on the Poetry of Ovid' (in FONDATION *Hardt* (*q.v.*) vol.II,pp.223-56).

———— , *Ovid Recalled*, Cambridge 1955.

———— , 'The Continuity of Propertius ii.13', *CR* 16, 1966, 141-5.

WILLCOCK, M.M., 'Mythological Paradeigma in the *Iliad*', *CQ* XIV, 1964, 141-54.

WILLIAMS, G.W., *Tradition and Originality in Roman Poetry*, Oxford 1968.

WIMMEL, W., *Der Frühe Tibull*, Munich 1968.

WITKE, C., *Ennaratio Catulliana, Carmina L,XXX,LXV,LXVIII*, Leiden 1968.

WLOSOK, A., 'Die Dritte Cynthia-Elegie des Properz (Prop. I,3)', *Hermes* 95, 1967, 330-52.

WÖLFFLIN, E., 'Zur Komposition des Tibulls', *RhM* 49, 1894, 270-4.

YARDLEY, J.C., 'The Roman Elegists, Sick Girls, and the *Soteria*', *CQ* 27, 1977, 394-401.

ZIEGLER, K., *Das Hellenistische Epos*, Leipzig 1966.

ZIELIŃSKI, T., 'De Tiresiae Actaeonisque Infortuniis', *Eos* 29, 1926, 1-7.

INDEX LOCORUM

(I have included only the more significant references)